# Cha-cha won't take off in the Senate, says Loren

Story on Page A2

## Erap gets new lawyer to stop Sandigan trial

**By Volt Contreras**

RATHER than prepare for his defense, former President Joseph Estrada has hired a new private lawyer to prevent the Sandiganbayan from further hearing the criminal cases filed against him, including plunder.

Estrada, who is detained at the Veter-

ERAP/ A15

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## WHAT'S INSIDE

- **4 new SARS deaths in HK** WORLD/A11
- **Gov't contains April budget gap at P6.58B** BUSINESS/B1
- **Strunk not likely to be granted bail–DOJ** NEWS/A7

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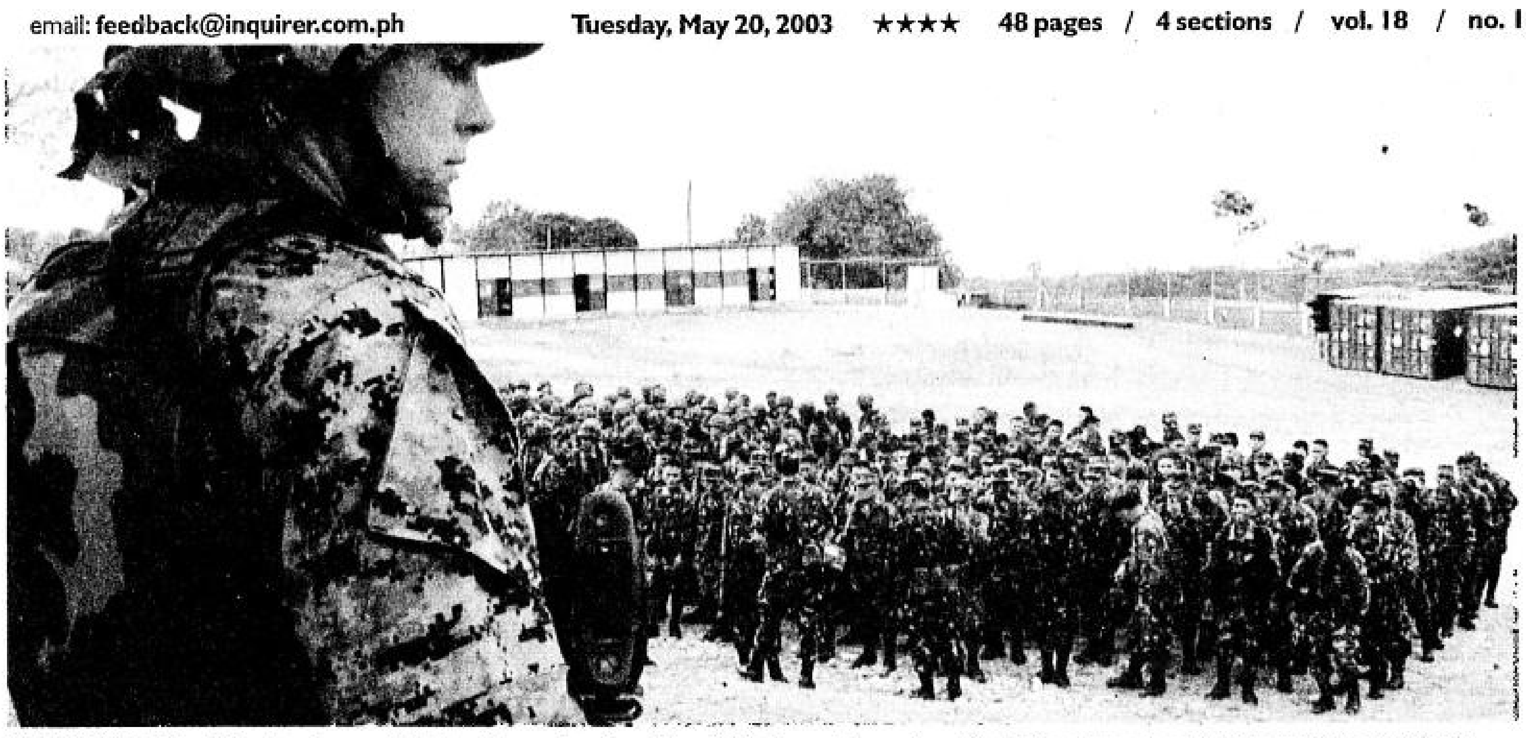

**AN AMERICAN** soldier stands guard during the graduation rites of Filipino soldiers who attended a six-week counterterrorism exercise in Zamboanga City. AP

## Stop fighting, bishops ask gov't, Moro rebels

**By Armand Nocum and Philip Tubeza**

THE COUNTRY'S influential Catholic bishops yesterday called for an immediate stop to the armed clashes in Mindanao, saying they had proof the MILF rebels wanted to talk peace.

In a statement signed by Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines asked both government forces and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to "stop all collateral damage by both sides."

Quevedo, the CBCP president, also said he had received a letter from the MILF expressing willingness to talk peace.

"In the present context, what is of primary importance is to stop all collateral damage by both sides. This can only be done by stopping the fighting and by resuming peace talks," Quevedo said.

He asked both the government and the MILF to send emissaries who would work to open communication lines.

"This communication between the two leaders is really the next logical step toward a ceasefire and the resumption of peace talks," he said.

He was referring to President

STOP/ A17

# More troops gird for war

## Senators raise howl; 300,000 flee homes

**By the PDI Mindanao Bureau**

THOUSANDS of fresh troops from other parts of the country have been sent to reinforce government soldiers carrying out "selective" attacks in four Mindanao provinces, even as angry senators crossed party lines to denounce the military's renewed campaign.

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., repeating his claim that the Macapagal administration was now engaged in state-sponsored terrorism, said the fighting had forced some 318,000 civilians in Zamboanga del Norte alone to flee their homes.

But in Zamboanga City, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko said the military was not actually waging war.

"There is no war, we cannot call bombing a war. What we are doing is dropping bombs and shelling in their selective areas," Kyamko said, referring to the MILF rebels the Armed Forces identified as having taken part in the raids on Maigo and Siocon towns.

Kyamko also said soldiers took control yesterday of the munici-

MORE/ A17

**PRESIDENT** Macapagal-Arroyo and President George W. Bush stand on the reviewing platform on the South Lawn of the White House during arrival ceremonies Monday. AP

## Bush to GMA: Proud to call you friend

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana**

WASHINGTON (Via PLDT)—"Madam President, for all you've done to make the world safer, America thanks you. I am proud to call you friend."

This was how US President George W. Bush welcomed President Macapagal-Arroyo to the White House on Monday morning.

The welcome ceremony at the South Lawn was attended by some 400 flag-waving members of the Filipino-American community here who broke into applause.

Bush said Ms Macapagal was the first Asian leader to make a state visit under his administration. Previous visitors had been the presidents of Poland and Mexico.

President Macapagal and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo were then introduced by Bush to Vice President Richard Cheney and other American government officials.

Earlier, the Fil-Am community here celebrated the star status the Bush administration accorded President Macapagal, but she said she was not about to demand a payback.

"I am not here with a laundry list. I am here

BUSH/ A16

## Metro cops placed on full alert vs terrorists

**By TJ Burgonio, Martin Marfil and Alcuin Papa**

DIRECTOR General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. yesterday placed the Philippine National Police on full alert in anticipation of retaliatory attacks by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and allied groups.

Said police spokesperson Director Ricardo de Leon: "We don't want to take chances because (when) there is an operation in Mindanao, there is always a threat. We have an intelligence report about threats of terrorist acts in key cities."

De Leon, however, was quick to point out that police intelligence officials had not monitored any specific threat by any group to mount bomb attacks in the metropolis.

"So far we can say that Manila is safe, and we are in control, but

METRO COPS/ A17

SHOWBIZ ANG DATING

PDI PHOTO

**DE VILLA:** Back in 'war room'

## De Villa: Old hand is new man in South

**By Dona Pazzibugan**

AN OLD hand is the new man in charge of the renewed campaign against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Renato de Villa emerged from a two-year hiatus to, in his own words, coordinate the military, civic and political aspects of the campaign.

De Villa, the President's first executive secretary, also served as defense secretary under President Fidel Ramos and Armed Forces chief of staff under President Corazon Aquino.

Yesterday, he faced Palace reporters for the first time since going on "indefinite leave" in April 2001 shortly before undergoing heart surgery. He showed up at the first of the daily press briefings held at the Malacañang "war room."

"The President asked me to assist her in coordinating the whole action on the government side. This is a combined civilian, military and police action," said De Villa.

He said the main aim of the campaign was to "dislodge and dismantle the capabilities of terrorist groups from launching a Siocon-type or Maigo-type attack on civilian targets."

The MILF had raided the two towns in recent weeks, causing a high number of civilian

DE VILLA/ A17

## *Hollywood Fil-Ams' aid enlisted for veterans bill*

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Nimfa U. Rueda**
*Contributor*

WASHINGTON (Via PLDT)—A touch of Hollywood will be added to the campaign to get a bill seeking a package of benefits for 11,000 US-based and 34,000 Philippine-based veterans of World War II approved in the US Congress, President Macapagal-Arroyo said here on the first

HOLLYWOOD/ A15

## Finland perils RP bid to be declared SARS-free

JUST as the Philippines is pressing the World Health Organization to strike it off the WHO blacklist of SARS-hit areas, Finland reported Monday that a young patient quarantined in a coastal city may have contracted the disease in the Philippines.

The patient, a 27-year-old Finn, fell ill hours after returning from a stay in the Philippines on May 14.

"The patient fulfills the WHO criteria for probable SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)," Mia Valkonen, an infectious disease specialist with the Finnish National Health Institute, told Agence France Presse.

"Two tests have been taken, but results are not ready yet," the AFP quoted Valkonen as saying in a dispatch from Helsinki, Finland's capital. The test results are expected to be available on Tuesday.

The patient has been quarantined in his hometown of Kotka, one of Finland's busiest harbors on the Russian border and 120 km east of Helsinki.

"There was a suspicion at once, and he has been treated according to our instructions," Ermo Haavisto, chief medical director of Kotka Central Hospital, told AFP.

But Haavisto added that the patient was feeling quite well at the moment, "in normal condition ... with no fever or symptoms at all," but would remain in quarantine for the time being.

This is the second time that a traveler from the Philippines has been declared a probable SARS case abroad. South Korea recently quarantined an 80-year-old Filipino-American who showed symptoms of the flu-like illness.

FINLAND/ A17

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SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/20/03

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| Tagaytay | Cloudy with Rains | Zamboanga | Cloudy with Rains |
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# Cha-cha dead in Senate—Loren

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**Majority Leader Loren Legarda said yesterday the Senate has run out of time to tackle the Charter change resolutions as Congress is set to take the final break of its 12th session on June 6.**

"I don't see it taking off in the Senate. If it's not dead yet, it's gasping for breath," Legarda said.

Legarda said that up to now, the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws has not managed to turn up with a committee report.

The committee, which is chaired by opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara, still has to hold one or two more hearings before it concludes its work, according to Legarda.

Legarda also pointed out that the Charter change issue was not really a priority of the Macapagal administration, noting that the resolution to amend the 1987 Constitution was not among the legislative items prioritized by the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac).

The majority leader said she always used the Ledac as a "guide on what to calendar" in the Senate.

LEGARDA

Legarda said she also did not think the public would appreciate it if Congress took up the Charter change issue ahead of other "glaring problems," including the ongoing military operations in Mindanao and the threat of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

"There's not enough time for such an important issue as amending the Constitution," she said.

Legarda said the prospect of electing in 2004 representatives to a constitutional convention that would tackle the proposed constitutional amendments was "dead."

"It's illusory," she said.

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"It's the lack of eight votes," Arroyo said.

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Barbers said he believes Congress can still catch up and work on Charter change when it reopens in July.

But by then, Congress would not have the time to choose between a constituent assembly or constitutional convention. It would have to go for a constituent assembly, he said.

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"We'll start a student crime prevention program because street crimes are aimed at students. We'd like to mobilize students and ask them to report suspects in places where there are problems of security," said police spokesperson Director Ricardo de Leon.

"We are encouraging them to text 2920 and help pinpoint certain areas where they think there is a prevalence of street crimes," he said.

During the meeting, the student leaders did not say what petty crimes were being committed against them or others, but admitted "being distracted" by pirated VCDs and drugs being peddled outside their schools.

"They commended our TXT 2920 and they asked to be part of it," he said.

The PNP hotline TXT 2920 was started last year to receive complaints against erring policemen. The complaints are referred to national support units for action.

Officials found that texters not only sent complaints against policemen but also reports about other crimes like drug peddling. *TJ Burgonio*

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COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/20/03

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## Second FRONT PAGE

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Ebdane broached his idea to 100 student leaders who took part last week in the presidential youth program, pointing out that this would be part of a "student crime prevention program."

"We'll start a student crime prevention program because street crimes are aimed at students. We'd like to mobilize students and ask them to report suspects in places where there are problems of security," said police spokesperson Director Ricardo de Leon.

"We are encouraging them to text 2920 and help pinpoint certain areas where they think there is a prevalence of street crimes," he said.

During the meeting, the student leaders did not say what petty crimes were being committed against them or others, but admitted "being distracted" by pirated VCDs and drugs being peddled outside their schools.

"They commended our TXT 2920 and they asked to be part of it," he said.

The PNP hotline TXT 2920 was started last year to receive complaints against erring policemen. The complaints are referred to national support units for action.

Officials found that texters not only sent complaints against policemen but also reports about other crimes like drug peddling. *TJ Burgonio*

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# RP troops poised to return to Aceh

THE PHILIPPINES is ready to send back its team of peacekeeping troops to Aceh after last-minute talks in Tokyo over the weekend failed to bring the peace process in the troubled Indonesian province back on track.

Despite Jakarta's decision to declare martial law in Aceh, Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said the government "continues to hope for peace . . . and (was) confident in the sincerity of the Indonesian government and the leaders of the Free Aceh Movement to bring peace to the people of Aceh." (See story in World, Page A12)

## Stand ready

"Although our peace monitors have left Aceh, we stand ready to send them back to help bring peace to the people of Aceh, once the situation allows, and if the Indonesian people believe that we can contribute to their efforts at achieving peace," Ople said.

Ople added that the Philippine continues to be committed to the cause of peace in Aceh and that it will always respond positively to any request from Indonesia for the Philippines to contribute to the peace process in Aceh.

Hundreds of Indonesian troops parachuted into Aceh yesterday as the military went on the offensive following the collapse of the talks in Tokyo.

Indonesian President Magawati Sukarnoputri imposed martial law in the troubled province just hours after the peace talks with the separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) broke down late Sunday.

## Negotiators nabbed

Indonesian police reportedly arrested the five peace negotiators for the GAM.

The Philippines pulled out its troops who had been deployed in Aceh as truce monitors after Jakarta said it could no longer ensure their safety.

Following the cessation of hostilities agreement (COHA) last December between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement, the Philippines and Thailand sent peace monitors to Aceh to help oversee the implementation of the COHA.

Meanwhile, Armed Forces chief Gen. Narciso Abaya yesterday rejected comparisons between the security situation in Aceh with Mindanao, where a military push against the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front began last weekend.

Abaya said President Macapagal-Arroyo has on a number of times "ruled out" martial rule in Mindanao.

He said it was possible the Aceh situation would have "spillover" effects on the rest of Southeast Asia.

"(However), I don't think it will really affect us so much," he said, as the Philippines does not share a border with the Indonesian province. *Norman Bordadora with a report from AFP*

# No Pinoys hurt in new blasts, says Ople

FOREIGN Secretary Blas Ople has said no overseas Filipino workers in Israel and Morocco were among those either hurt or killed in the bomb attacks in the two countries over the weekend.

"I have been in touch with our ambassador in Tel Aviv, Ambassador Belen Anota, and she has reported that no Filipinos were killed or injured in the attack," Ople said.

He said Anota has "checked and double-checked and is glad to report that there were no Filipinos involved."

He said no Filipinos were hurt in the attacks in Casablanca, Morocco last Friday either.

"We continue to coordinate with the proper authorities in Morocco to ensure the safety of the Filipinos there," he said.

He said Anota remained in constant touch with the Filipino community in Israel and has reiterated to them the importance of exercising care and vigilance.

The foreign secretary expressed the Philippine government's condemnation of both terrorist attacks.

"Even as terrorists seem to be determined to carry out their deeds, we remain hopeful the steps being taken will lead to lasting peace," he said. *Norman Bordadora*

# House shortens workweek

THE HOUSE of Representatives is adopting a four-day workweek beginning next month to reduce its water and power consumption.

The "compressed" work schedule, however, will require employees to put in 10 hours a day, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., from Monday to Thursday..

In a May 15 memo, Speaker Jose de Venecia said the scheme would enable the House to cut down on its utility expenses. It would also give House employees more time to be with their families and reduce the time they spend on the road to get to and from work.

The new schedule takes effect on June 2. *Volt Contreras*

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## ST. JAMES COLLEGE OF QUEZON CITY ADVISORY

To: St. James College Parents & Students

There are teachers or former teachers of the St. James College of Quezon City, allegedly headed by Lolita Fernandez, who are engaging in ECONOMIC SABOTAGE against the College by spreading misinformation/ disinformation about the College. They are misleading parents not to enroll their children at St. James. We have identified these persons and appropriate complaints are being prepared against them. These are teachers or former teachers who have committed anomalies at the College for which they are being charged for "ESTAFA THROUGH FALSIFICATION OF PRIVATE DOCUMENTS" and are also being administratively charged for other anomalies they committed not only against the interests of the College but also against the interests of the parents/students, for which many of them were dismissed. An example was their abandonment of their classes, leaving their students unattended while they were conducting their union meeting during class hours. They cheated both the students and the school administration by punching their time records hence making it appear that they were inside their classrooms teaching the students when the truth is that they were not.

Contrary to what these teachers are telling the public, St. James College has now a new bred of experienced, dedicated and true academicians who are genuinely concerned with the interests of their students and not just for their purely selfish interests. These new teachers/instructors/professors are more committed to deliver quality and globally competitive education for which St. James College is known together with its excellent facilities which are being continuously upgraded and new ones introduced. Because of its high standard of education and its updated facilities, St. James College is on course towards our objective of attaining full university status within five (5) years.

All parents/students are hereby assured by the College Administration that the issues being brought against the College by these misguided group of teachers are being properly addressed in accordance with our laws. Ultimately, truth and justice will prevail.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO GIVE US YOUR FULL TRUST AND CONFIDENCE. ON OUR PART, WE WILL DELIVER OUR OWN RESPONSIBILITY TO YOU, STUDENTS & PARENTS OF ST. JAMES COLLEGE, NAMELY, HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION AND YET AFFORDABLE!

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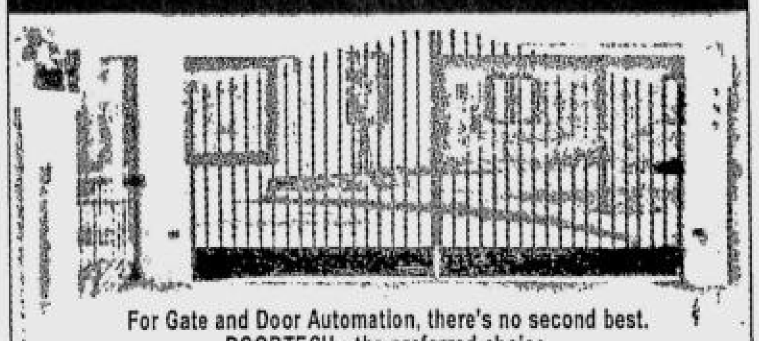

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# Justice exec to pursue Gracia allegations in US

**By Michael Lim Ubac**

A JUSTICE official wants to set a meeting with Gracia Burnham in the United States this week to obtain her deposition on the alleged collusion between the military and Abu Sayyaf which she wrote about in her book.

Justice Undersecretary Merceditas N. Gutierrez, who is leaving today for Ottawa, Canada, to attend an international conference on the transfer of prisoners, said she is flying home by way of the US and would seek a meeting with Burnham who lives in Wichita, Kansas.

The Ottawa conference ends on May 23.

## 3-man panel

Gutierrez heads a three-person fact-finding panel formed last Thursday by Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong to look into Burnham's claims which appeared in her book "In the Presence of My Enemies" released last week.

Gutierrez said she would relay her request to meet with Burnham through Hawaii-based Federal Bureau of Investigation agent John Grey. Burnham had executed an affidavit before Grey.

"We need to seek qualifications on the statements she executed before the FBI," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez said she expected Burnham, who was abducted along with her husband Martin by the Abu Sayyaf last year, to agree to a meeting.

"I don't think she will refuse to give a statement. She is a good Christian. She will cooperate with us... in the interest of justice," Gutierrez said.

If Burnham agrees to the meeting, she will be asked, under oath, to answer clarificatory questions relating to her book and the affidavit she gave to the FBI.

## Specific details

Gutierrez said the FBI affidavit contained only "general statements of what happened to her," hence the need for specific details.

To be admissible as evidence, the interview will have to be conducted in a Philippine Embassy or consulate with the assistance of the FBI and Burnham's counsel.

"Aside from the interview that we'll have to conduct, we will also ask that she give a written statement so that if there should be any action against the military officials involved, then the written statement of Mrs. Burnham will serve as a basis," Gutierrez said.

Last week, Gutierrez said the DOJ would need to get Burnham's deposition in the US as "we cannot just rely on a book."

Gutierrez said Burnham could choose to execute an affidavit and have it subscribed before an authorized official in a Philippine embassy in the US.

Even if Gutierrez fails to get Burnham's deposition, the justice department could still continue with its investigation, she said.

"On the basis of our investigation, it is possible for us to file the corresponding charges if there is really a ground to charge... the military," she said.

In her book, which recalled her 377-day ordeal at the hands of the Abu Sayyaf, Burnham alleged that the military was in collusion with the ASG and even claimed that a Filipino general had demanded a 50-percent cut of the ransom money.

The disclosures drew various reactions in the country, prompting Burnham to issue a statement on May 8.

"I will let my book speak for itself," said Burnham. "If there was collusion between the military and the Abu Sayyaf, God is the righteous judge and someday that will be made right."

## 'Land we loved'

The statement was addressed to her "friends in the Philippines" and "to all of you who live in the land that Martin and I loved."

Burnham objected to the use of the word "allegations."

"I do not like that word—allegations," she said. "I am not pointing an accusing finger at anyone. I am relating what I was told by the Abu Sayyaf."

# Probe of general, 2 others on

MILITARY prosecutors are investigating a general and two other senior Army officers over their alleged collusion with Abu Sayyaf kidnappers, the military chief of staff said Monday.

Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, Col. Juvenal Narcise and Lt. Col. Eliseo Campued have been summoned to respond to the allegations—renewed in a book by recovered hostage Gracia Burnham—which could lead to a court-martial, Gen. Narciso Abaya told reporters.

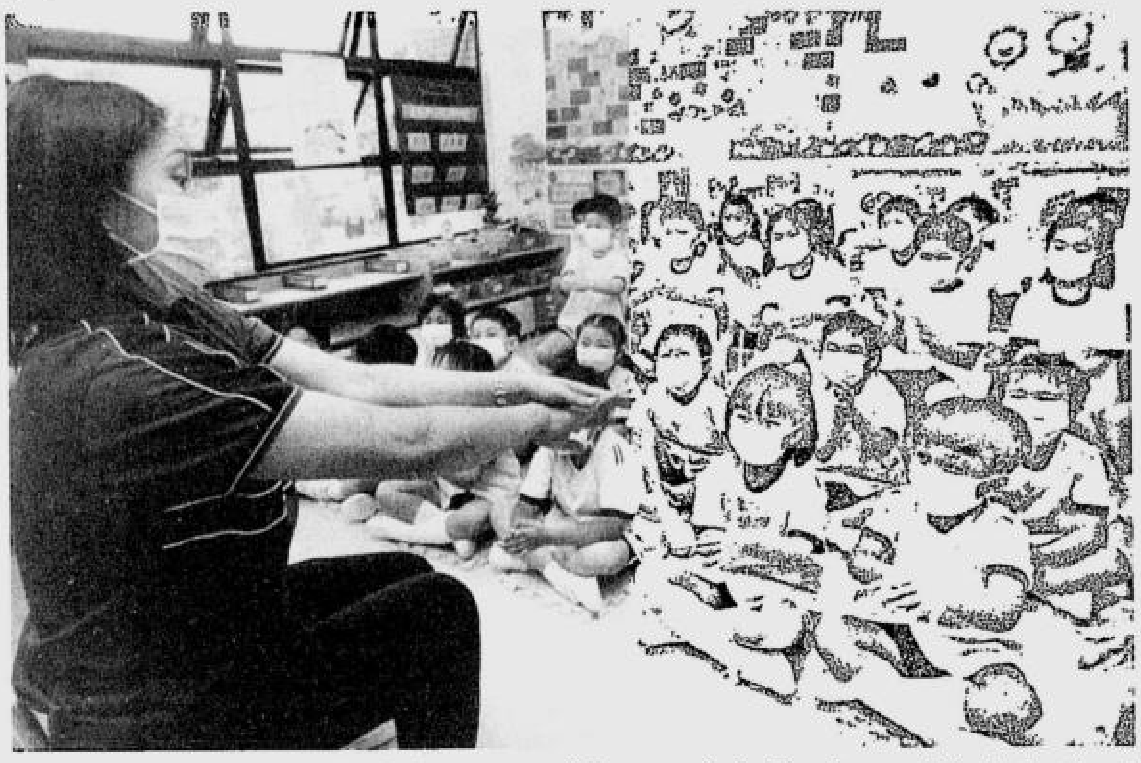
Witnesses had alleged at an inquiry conducted by Congress last year that the officers had allowed Abu Sayyaf guerrillas to escape from a hospital in Lamitan, Basilan, with their hostages, who included Burnham and her husband Martin, after they were surrounded by government troops in June 2001.

The three officers have rejected charges of collusion with the guerrillas, and denied they had been conduits of ransom money for the release of a number of Filipino hostages.

"There was a recommendation by the Senate for the military to conduct court-martial proceedings against the accused officers," Abaya said.

"The way we conduct a court-martial is, first, there is a pre-trial investigation to determine if there is enough evidence to continue with the general court-martial. It's standard procedure," he said.

Abaya rejected the publicized allegations of Burnham, an American Christian missionary who was rescued last year, that she suspected her captors of being in league with certain Filipino military officials, including a general. *AFP*



**A HONG Kong teacher shows her kindergarten pupils how to wash their hands properly, in the first day of classes since schools were closed in the Chinese territory in March following the SARS outbreak.** AFP

# As SARS fears ease, HK studes return to class

HONG KONG—As the fear of SARS here eased, some 380,000 kindergarten and primary grades pupils headed back to schools that reopened Monday, while the Hong Kong health director said she hoped the World Health Organization would soon lift a travel warning. *(See related story in World, Page A11.)*

Hong Kong shut its schools on March 29 as a precaution against the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, which has infected 1,713 people here and killed 247.

About 720,000 primary and secondary students have returned to class as schools opened in batches, with students and teachers required to wear surgical masks and have their temperatures checked daily.

At least 18 schools—mostly kindergarten—have decided to remain shut for now, said Roger Cheung, a spokesman of the Education and Manpower Bureau.

Eighty-two students have caught SARS, but there has been no evidence it spread in the schools, Cheung said.

Hong Kong health chiefs, meanwhile, have been lobbying the WHO to lift an advisory against unnecessary travel to the territory, which has devastated airlines, hotels and other businesses. The two sides were to meet later Monday in Geneva.

Health Director Dr. Margaret Chan said she hoped the advisory can be lifted before the end of June, giving the travel industry a bit of relief before summer vacation time.

"If we are talking about waiting until the summer vacation in July or August before the travel advisory can be lifted, I think it's too late," Chan said in an interview with local network TVB.

A university poll found that 50 percent of respondents are losing hope in Hong Kong's future due to SARS. The telephone survey of 1,250 people, conducted on May 2-5, had a margin of error of plus and minus five percentage points.

The survey by researchers from the Chinese University of Hong Kong also found that 18 percent of respondents wash their hands more than 15 times a day as a precaution.

About 19 percent of those polled suffered from anxiety and felt down, with symptoms such as fatigue, muscle pains and insomnia. *AP*

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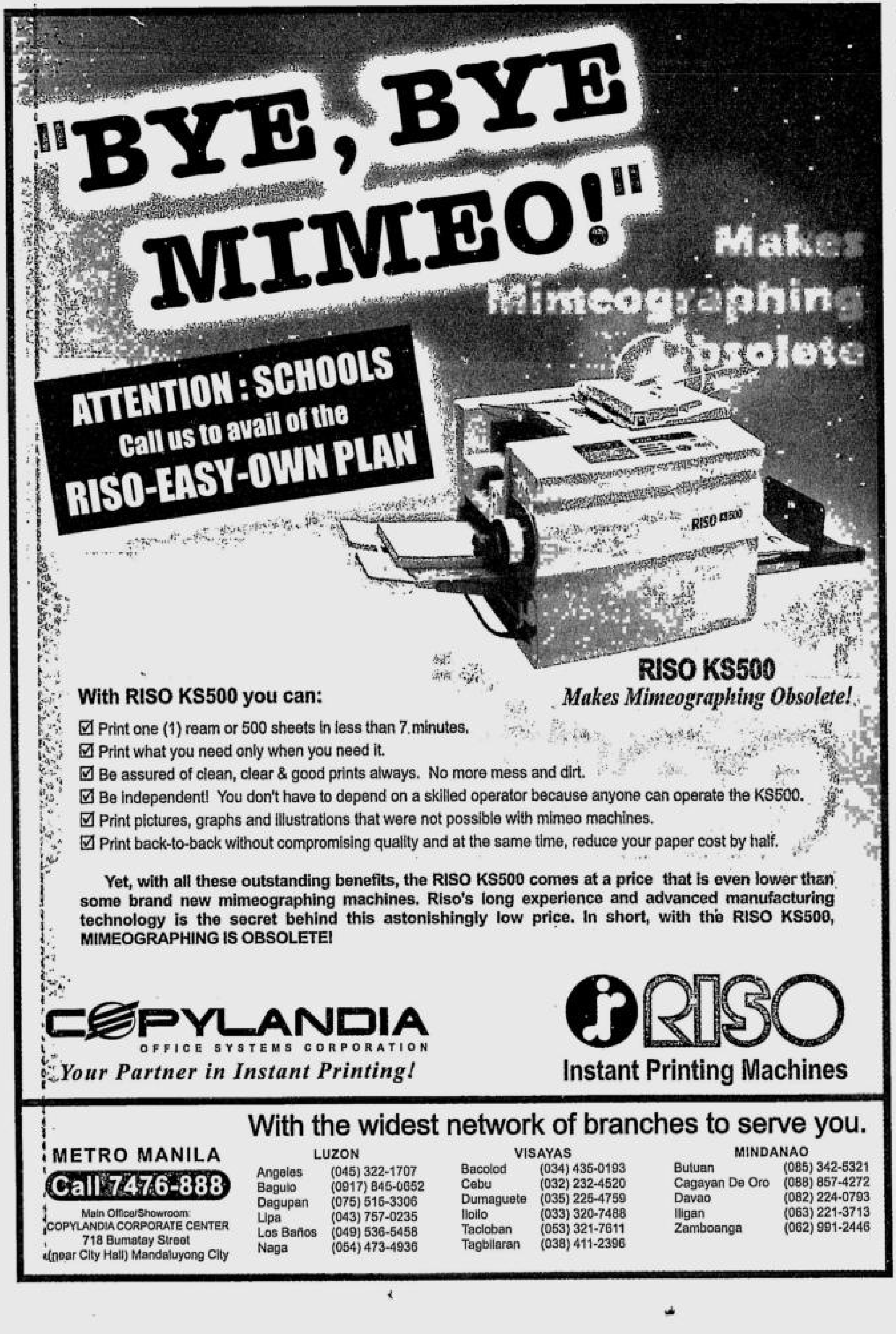

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# Irish gov't accused of bias

THE IRISH government was accused of discrimination Friday after it asked athletes from SARS-affected nations not to travel to next month's Special Olympics in Ireland.

Organizers of the event which involves athletes with learning disabilities said the request amounted to an effective ban.

"We question any decision that discriminates against Special Olympics athletes over and above any person or group of persons traveling to Ireland from these countries," said Mary Davis, chief executive of the World Summer Games' organizing committee.

After taking expert advice, Ireland on Thursday asked five teams—from China, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and the Philippines—not to attend the games because of the risk of infection.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome has no known cure and has killed hundreds and infected thousands worldwide, mostly in China and Hong Kong.

Towns and villages across Ireland have been gearing up to host about 7,000 athletes and coaches from 160 countries in the run-up to the games, which start on June 21. *Reuters*

**PO2 Wendell Abellana of the Cebu City SWAT team examines one of the mortar shells that surfaced after the rains.** JUNJIE MENDOZA, PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

# Rains reveal munitions

**By Jhunnex Napallacan**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

CEBU CITY—One hundred and fifty-nine World War II-era mortar shells were discovered in a mountain village here Saturday, a day after heavy rains hit many areas of the city.

Neatly stacked under a rip-rap wall that had given way following Friday's heavy rains, the unfired shells were found in Barangay Kalunasan by Diosdado Gongog, who had gone outside his house to clean up the mess left by the downpour.

Gongog called up barangay officials who notified the Cebu City Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team.

Senior Supt. Cecil Ezra Sandalo, Cebu City Police Office (CCPO) director, said the shells would be turned over to the Explosive Ordinance Division of the Armed Forces Central Command (EOD-Centcom) for proper disposal.

SWAT team member SPO4 Sandley Sabang said the munitions have been transferred to an area outside the SWAT office in the North Reclamation area. He said some of the projectiles no longer contained gunpowder.

But he cautioned that the SWAT team was not expert in bombs and could not conclude anything about the mortar shells or their potential to explode.

This was the reason, he said, they would be turned over to EOD-Centcom.

# GMA to visit South Korea in June

MS MACAPAGAL

SEOUL—President Macapagal-Arroyo will make a state visit to South Korea on June 2-4 to meet with her South Korean counterpart, Roh Moo-Hyun, the president's office said here Monday.

A Macapagal-Roh summit, set for June 3, would focus on economic ties and the standoff over North Korea's nuclear weapons drive.

Ms Macapagal will be the first foreign head of state to visit South Korea since Roh took office in February. She will be accompanied by a 20-member economic delegation.

President Macapagal is currently on a state visit to the United States, where she is being feted by President George W. Bush for her unflinching support for the US-led war on Iraq as part of the "coalition of the willing."

The Korean peninsula is the scene of renewed hostilities after the communist North dropped out of the nuclear test ban treaty and has been threatening to continue production of nuclear weapons. *With AFP*

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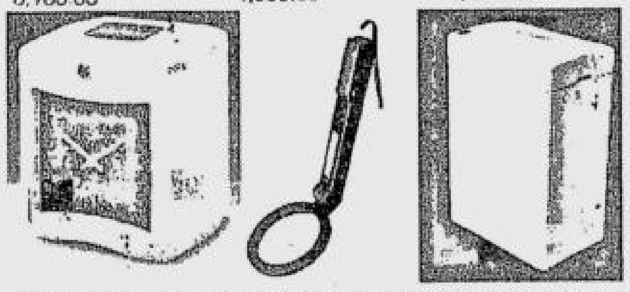

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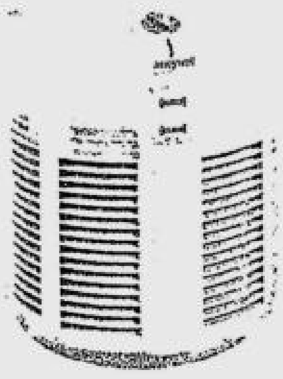

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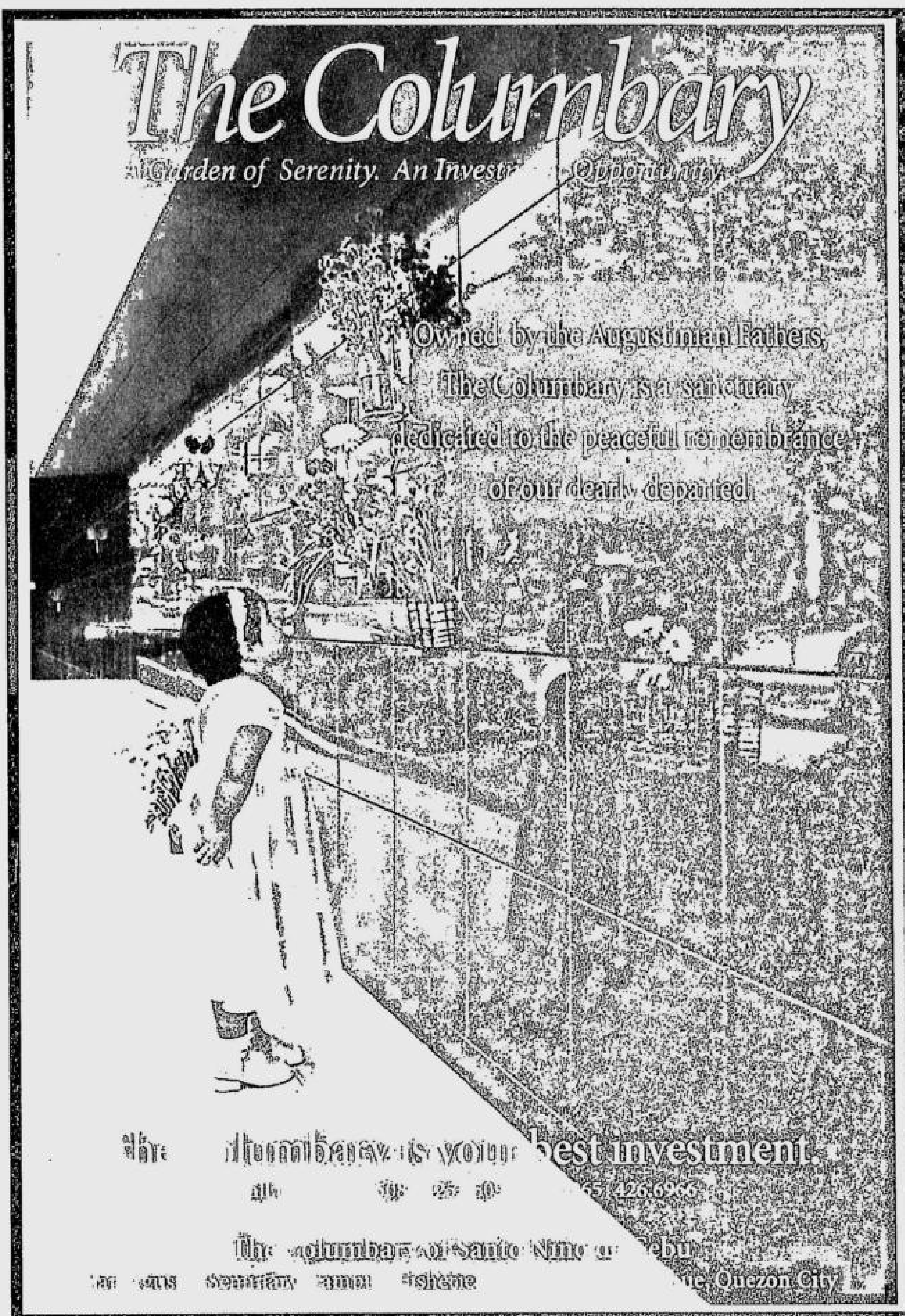

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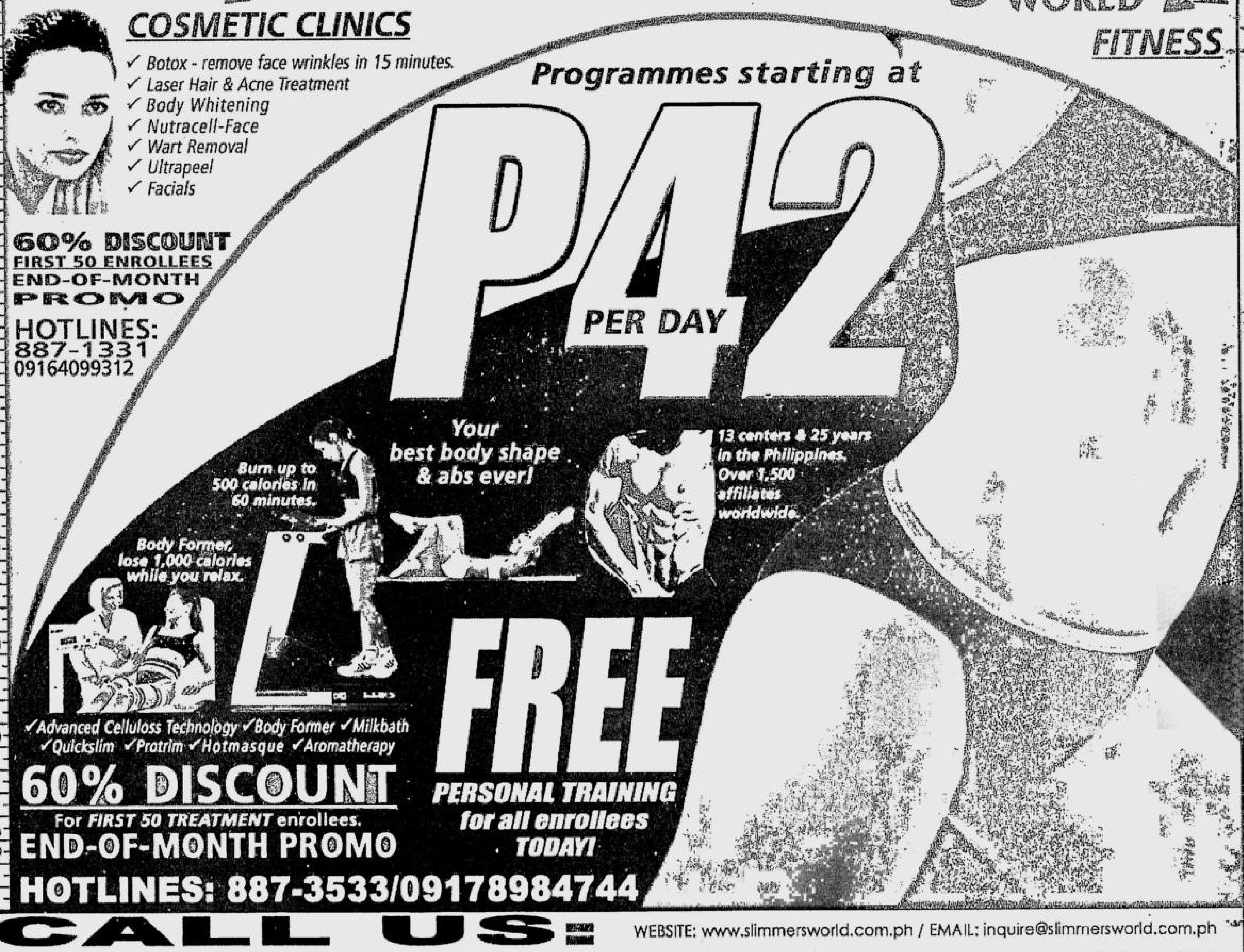

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# AMA Computer University tops again nationwide SWS Survey

In the latest poll conducted for the first quarter of 2003 by Social Weather Station, the country's most respected survey group, AMA Computer University (AMACU) ranked number one as "The Most Recommended Computer School" in the Philippines. AMA Computer University (AMACU) bested its closest competitor in the category by a significant 36%. AMA also far outranked some of the country's leading universities including University of the Philippines, Ateneo, La Salle, UST, Informatics and Mapua.

**MOST RECOMMENDED COMPUTER SCHOOLS:RANK 1**
Base: Total with rank 1 choices

| | | SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | RP | ABC | D | E |
| AMACU | 52% | 57% | 53% | 45% |
| STI | 16 | 13 | 18 | 15 |
| UP | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| La Salle | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

Among those who ranked AMA as the number one computer school, the top four reasons they cited for recommending AMA were the following: first, it was recognized as the most popular school apart from being the first IT University in Asia. Second, it was known for its high standard of teachers and its advanced, high quality curriculum. Third, it was recognized as having the most modern, complete facilities and advanced technology. Last but not least, its successful graduates were perceived to have a much easier time finding jobs.

Other reasons cited were: affordable tuition fees for high quality education, global affiliation with IT industry giants like Microsoft, many accessible branches nationwide, and computer specialization and focus as compared to the more established schools and universities.

## Socio-demographic profile of respondents

The respondent profile which is deemed as representative of the Philippine population is as follows: 40.7% urban and 59.3 % rural. Most of the respondents came from Balance Luzon and NCR with a combined total of 57.1%. 19.9% came from Visayas while 23% came from Mindanao. The gender was equally divided between male and female at exactly 50% each. In terms of age, most of the respondents were 45 years old and above at 32.7%. The second largest group were the 25-34 age range at 28.2%, 35-44 year olds comprised 21.7% while the 18-24 group made up only 17.3%. In terms of economic class, most of the respondents came from the D socio-economic bracket at 66%. The E bracket comprised 25.1% while ABC respondents came in at 9%.

## Highlights of the survey

Based on other highlights of the survey one can conclude that there has been a dramatic increase, in the number of students who would like to enroll in computer schools in NCR, especially among the ABC socio-economic class. This is deemed to be a good sign for the entire Information Technology (IT) industry.

## The AMA Computer University Advantage

There are nine major reasons why AMACU has taken the lead over other schools and universities when it comes to IT-based learning.

1. Adherence to international university level standards, the highest academic distinction any institution can earn globally.

2. Dual Diploma Program which gives enrollees the chance to earn two diplomas upon graduation. One from the University, and another from NCC-UK for international employment. Also, all IT industry giants have partnered with AMA for their programs.

3. AMACU's pursuit of Research, Publication, and Library Development is unparalleled in the country.

4. International Recognition. Since 1981, AMA has provided Asia and the world the backbone for its IT workforce.

5. Globally trained faculty, especially in new areas of learning like BS Mechatronics which is currently being taught by Dr. Mustafa Okyaya Kaynak, UNESCO Chair in Mechatronics and Visiting Professor at AMA Computer University. Mechatronics is deemed as the next high-earning frontier in pioneering careers.

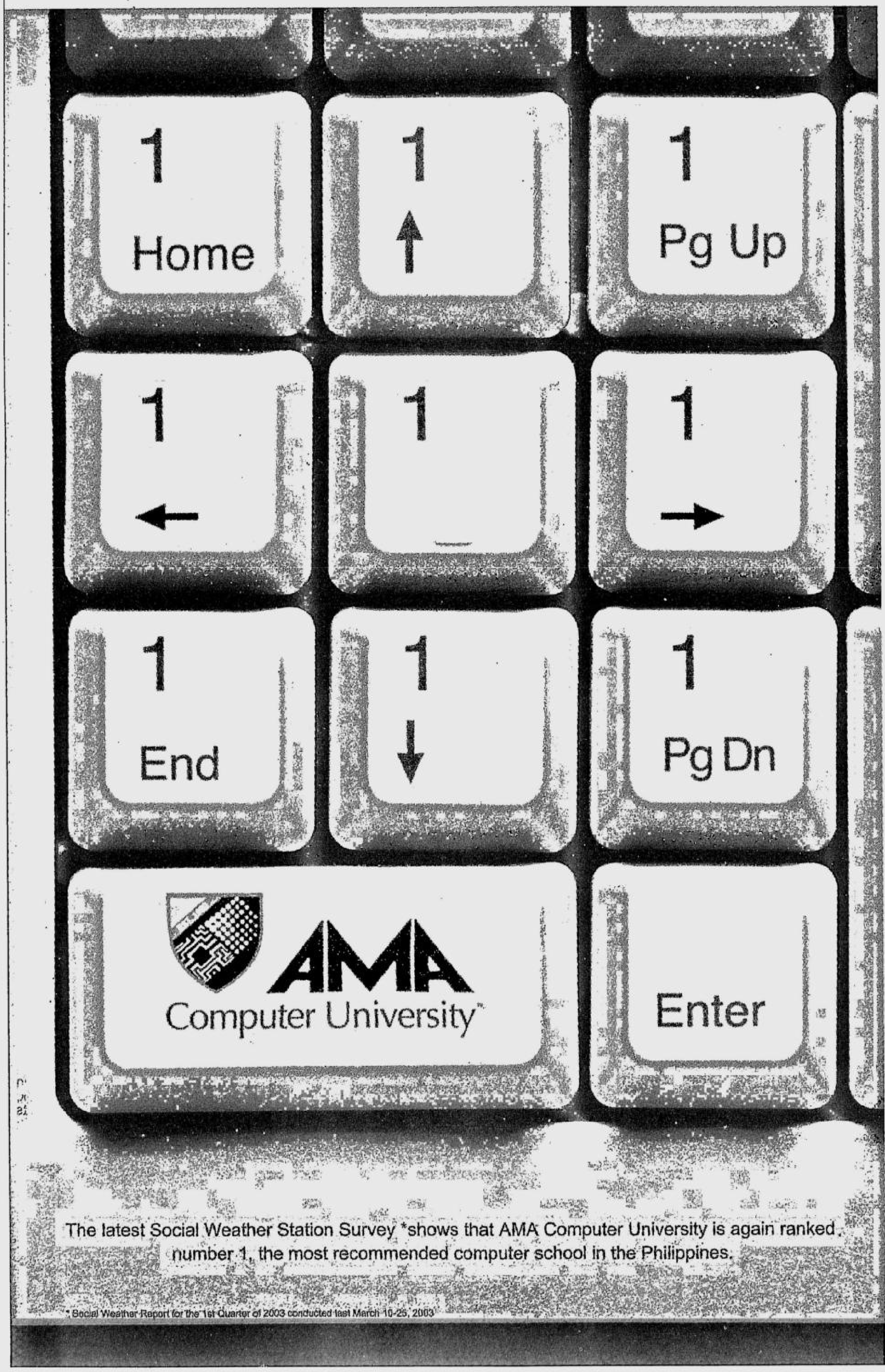
6. As a pioneer in teaching Mechatronics in the Philippines, a P500 million laboratory facility has been prepared for the hands-on use of AMA students.

7. The power of 4: AMA, Digitel, Bayantel and PT&T joined forces to provide AMAers with the fastest, widest Internet access on-demand on its Wide Area Network (WAN). Powered by AMA's 2.0 GHz computers, the Pentium 4 standard, on AMA's renowned 1:1 student-computer ratio.

8. University-level Masters and Doctorate courses. MA in Computer Education MS Computer Science, Master in Business Administration, Master in Public Administration, MBA on-line and Ph.D. in BA Major in Management, Marketing, Finance and MIS

9. High quality but very affordabale education. With the Study Now, Pay Lite scheme which gives students the option of up to 10 years to pay. And the Subsidized Tuition Fee Program wherein students are required to pay only 50% of their total fees.

With all these advantages, no wonder AMA keeps topping nationwide surveys as The Number One Computer School in the Country.



The latest Social Weather Station Survey *shows that AMA Computer University is again ranked number 1, the most recommended computer school in the Philippines.

* Social Weather Report for the 1st Quarter of 2003 conducted last March 10-25, 2003

# Strunk not likely to be granted bail–DOJ

**By Michael L. Ubac**

ROD Lauren Strunk, the principal accused in the murder of his wife actress Nida Blanca, has a very slim chance of being granted bail in the United States while awaiting the start of his extradition hearing.

Justice Undersecretary Merceditas N. Gutierrez said the US Department of Justice will oppose Strunk's petition for bail at a hearing on May 21.

Strunk is currently in a detention facility in Sacramento, California. He was provisionally arrested on May 13 by US marshals based on an arrest warrant issued by Pasig Judge Alex Quiros.

Gutierrez said suspects under provisional arrest were not granted bail.

"I don't know of any US jurisprudence that grants bail while under provisional arrest," she said.

Under the Extradition Law, the requesting state has 60 days to formally file an extradition request after the provisional arrest of the suspect.

So far, Gutierrez said, her staff has gathered 70 percent of the required documents.

Regarding the claim of Strunk's American lawyer Jeffrey Kravitz's that his client was suffering from diabetes and should be granted bail because of his condition, Gutierrez said: "As long as it is not life-threatening, that will not be grounds for bail."

Gutierrez said "severe" not "controlled" diabetes might qualify as a "special compelling humanitarian" reason to be allowed to post bail.

Strunk has reportedly asked to be transferred to a hospital because of his ailment.

# Gov't buying AIDS drugs

FOR THE FIRST time since the first case of human immunodeficiency virus—the virus that causes AIDS—was discovered in the country, the government has directly purchased medicines designed to slow down the growth of the virus in the body.

The Department of Health will be placing an order for P750,000 worth of anti-retro viral (ARV) medicines from India in a bid to maintain the "low and slow" development of HIV and AIDS cases in the Philippines.

The national drug policy committee approved last February the inclusion of ARVs in the national drug formulary—a list of medical substances and formulations for making medicines—allowing the government to buy the HIV medicines directly.

The first shipment of ARVs will be arriving in two months, said Roderick Poblete, officer in charge of the Philippine National AIDS Council (PNAC).

Health Undersecretary Antonio Lopez said the government has been striving to address the problem of the medicines' prohibitive cost for people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA).

Many of the PLWHA cannot afford the ARVs which are distributed by private firms and can only be bought from hospitals with a prescription. Drugstores do not distribute the medicine because it does not have that big a market in the country.

The ARVs, which PLWHA need to take every month for the rest of their lives, cost from P30,000 to P40,000 each, but with the direct purchase this has been reduced to about P2,000. *Blanche S. Rivera*

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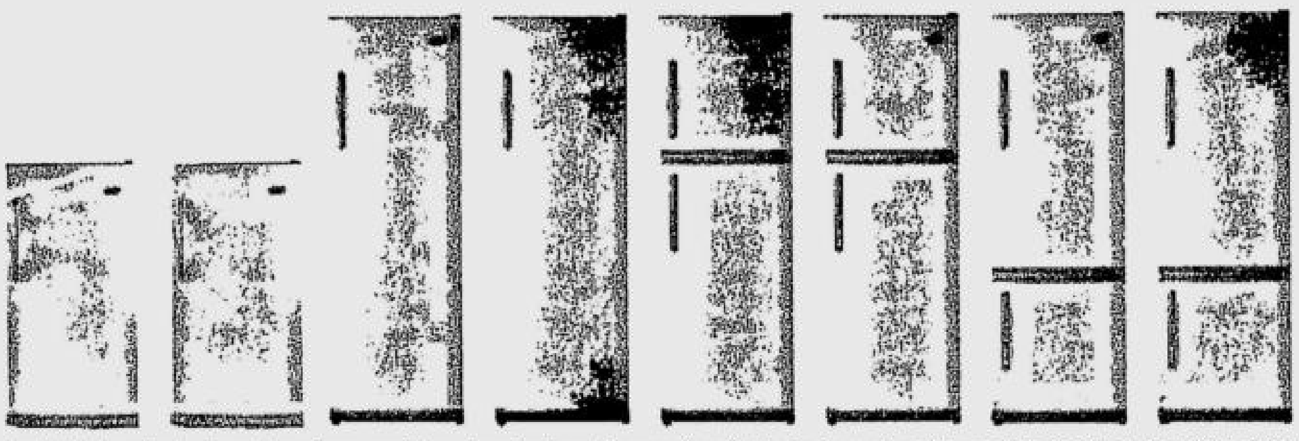

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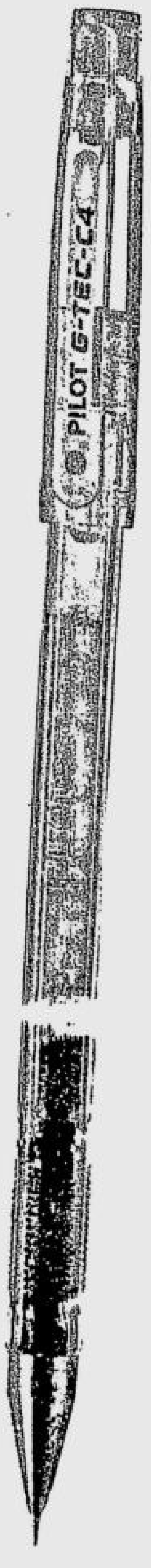

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# OPINION

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## Controversy over corn

**EDITORIAL**

TO Bt or not to Bt—that is the question. Bt, of course, refers to *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a common soil bacteria that produces toxins that target certain insects. It is the bacteria that has been "embedded" in Bt corn that is now the subject of a controversy in agricultural, scientific and environmental circles in the country.

For close to a month now, four environmental activists have been conducting a hunger strike to oppose the introduction of Bt corn into the country. At first they were ignored by government officials, but now Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo is talking with them and listening to their arguments. We hope this dialogue will result in a win-win solution for the nation.

What are the arguments against the introduction of Bt corn?

First, Bt corn, whose pollen carries the poison gene, will cross-pollinate native corn varieties. Once released, Bt corn will be very difficult and expensive to eradicate, if it can be eradicated at all.

Second, scientists have raised serious health and environmental safety issues against Bt corn. These issues include the risk of stomach and colon cancers, allergies, poisoning of the soil, the possible appearance and spread of new or more virulent strains of infectious agents and the killing of non-targeted organisms, among other things.

Third, Monsanto's patent covers the Bt poison gene, and so it may sue Filipino farmers for unauthorized (although unintentional) possession of its protected gene. (Remember, Bt corn pollen can easily cross-pollinate native varieties.) Monsanto has filed and won suits against American and Canadian farmers.

Fourth, There is no reason for the government to rush the distribution of Bt corn. The major issue corn farmers are facing today is not the corn borer. The major issues are market prices, financing, government support and farm-to-market roads and infrastructure.

Fifth, There are sustainable alternatives to the control of the corn borer, such as pest-tolerant varieties of corn, trichogramma, detasseling, natural pesticides and the timing of planting to avoid the corn borer season.

Sixth, Once the Bt corn is commercialized, a farmer can plant only Bt-corn seeds in about 60 percent of his farm as the remaining 40 percent would have to be planted to other corn varieties to serve as "refugia." (A refugium is an area in which a population of organisms can survive through a period of unfavorable conditions.)

Seventh, The Bt corn will have a high yield at first, but eventually the corn borer will develop immunity and will destroy a substantial part of the crop and thus the farmers would end up losing income.

Eighth, Bt corn yields may not equal those of superior non-Bt hybrids. The Bt gene only provides yield protection, not a yield increase.

Ninth, There is no control of other insects such as corn rootworm, stalk borer and black cutworm.

Tenth, Bt corn is more expensive. A US study showed that Bt corn typically costs $14 more per unit.

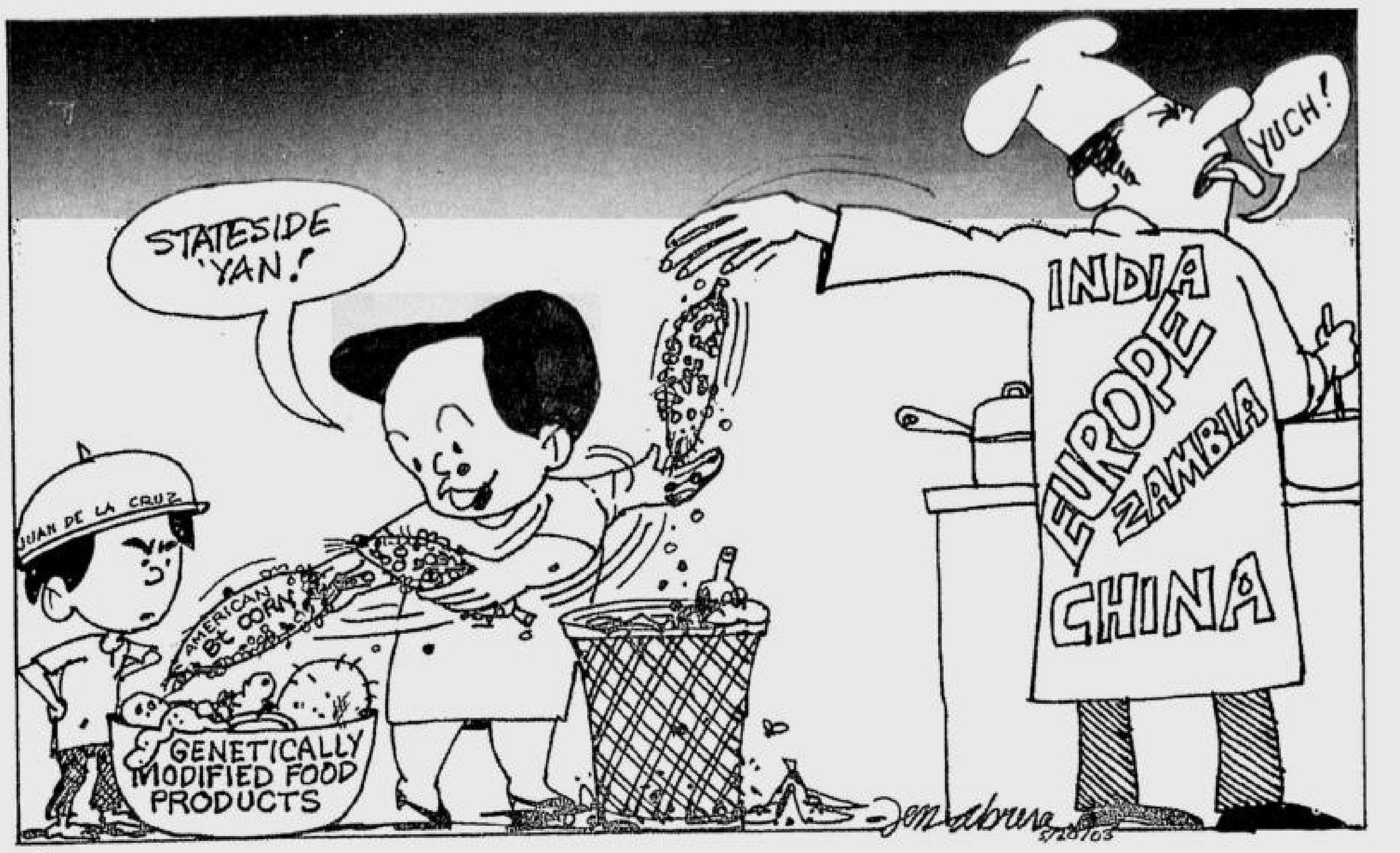
Bt corn may endanger the health of human beings. Last April 22, Dr. Mae-Wan Ho, a scientist and designated expert of the International Cartagena Biosafety Protocol and director of the Institute of Science in Society representing 578 scientists around the world, urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to reconsider her approval of Bt corn and explained why.

Recently, 18 Filipino scientists and physicians led by Dr. Nelia Cortes-Maramba of the Pharmacology and Toxicology Department of the University of the Philippines' College of Medicine issued a position paper against the commercialization of Bt corn. They said that Bt corn could spread antibiotic-resistant genes that would render life-saving antibiotics ineffective.

These are not minor concerns that those who are opposing the introduction of Bt corn into the country are raising. The gist of their warning is that Bt corn may do more harm than good to the country.

The opposers say that "Bt corn is a biological time bomb waiting to explode." Genetically modified organisms like Bt corn are not evolved naturally, and they can reproduce, mutate and move within the environment. They are unstable and the consequences of releasing them to the environment cannot be predicted. Once harmful effects become apparent, it may already be too late and perhaps irreversible.

As the protesters say, there is no reason to rush the release of Bt corn into the Philippine environment. At the very least, public hearings should be held to which representatives of the affected sectors of society should be invited so that the issues could be debated and scientific evidence presented and weighed.



## New power deals fool the people again

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo made two booboos recently relating to the high power costs. To assuage irate consumers demanding real solutions to the PPA (purchased power adjustment), the President ordered:

1. Napocor to reduce its generation of electricity so that privately owned IPPs (independent power producers) can maximize their output (supposedly, this will lower the PPA of the IPP, Meralco in particular); and

2. Napocor to pre-terminate contracts with IPPs and pay the IPPs for what they would earn during the remaining term of the contracts. Again, this is supposed to terminate the PPA of the IPPs. No IPP, no PPA, right?

Wrong. The twin moves will not lower but further raise the PPAs. Energy Secretary Vince Perez has been duped by the IPPs and he, in turn, has misled the President. Let's look at Item No. 1 first.

The President announced that because the Lopez-owned power plants will be allowed to produce more power which would be used by its sister corporation Meralco, instead of buying its power from the Napocor, the PPA of Meralco will go down by five to 25 centavos per kilowatt hour.

"This is tokenism at its worst," said former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. "Consumers will actually be paying from P2.12 to P3.77 more per kWh."

This is how it goes: Meralco has a 3,600-megawatt power supply contract for 10 years with the Napocor. Starting in 2001, Meralco violated this contract by reducing its power purchases from the Napocor so that it can buy more electricity from its own sister-corporation IPPs. Consequently the Napocor suffered huge losses from 1,400 MW of unsold electricity.

The capacity fees on these plants caused the Napocor PPA to reach P1.25 per kWh which the President reduced to 40 centavos per kWh when her popularity rating dropped in May 2002.

Despite the reduction in Napocor's PPA, Luzon consumers continued to be charged by Meralco as much as P2.98 per kWh in PPA because of the high cost of power it is buying from its sister corporations.

Meralco is supposed to pay the Napocor as penalty for the contract violation but it has not done so and it now owes the Napocor around P28 billion.

Now at 5- to 25-centavo per kWh reduction in rate sounds good. But the President doesn't realize that sourcing power from Napocor will reduce power rates by P2.12 to P3.77 per kWh.

"If Meralco is committed to its public service obligation as a public utility firm," Enrile said, "it should maximize its purchases from the Napocor which sells power at only P3.62 per kWh compared to P7.39 to P5.74 per kWh from its sister-IPPs." The Napocor will sink further into debt if it limits production or closes down its power plants which are efficient.

The Filipinos will be hit with a double whammy. The consumers will pay more for its electricity and the taxpayers will pay for the increased debts of the Napocor.

"This is a sellout of the national interest," Enrile said.

Let's go now to Item No. 2.

The President has announced plans to preterminate and buy-out 15 IPP contracts supposedly to save on minimum off-take payments to the IPPs.

Buy-out provisions in IPP/BOT contracts allow the Napocor to preterminate contracts at a price that would still enable the IPP to maintain its return on investment (translation: profits). Unfortunately, buy-out prices are so high that the IPPs will make windfall profits (translation: unusually high profits) instead of just maintaining its original rate of return on investment. This is one of the consistently onerous provisions of the BOT contracts signed during the Aquino and Ramos administrations.

For example, the government is planning to buy out for US$113 million Enron's contract for its 105 MW diesel plant in Subic. Enron's 10-year BOT contract is maturing in two years at which time the Napocor will own the power plant without paying a single centavo.

"So why are we agreeing to buy the two years for $113 million or P6 billion?" Enrile asked.

"A new 105 MW diesel plant should not cost more than $70 million today and an 8-year-old diesel plant should not cost more than half of that, or $35 million. So why are we willing to pay $113 million?" Enrile asked again. "If the $113 million is the buy-out value under the contract, why is the government exercising its buy-out right?

"I estimate that the obligation of the Napocor to Enron for the remaining two years is only $30 million. So why are we willing to overpay $83 million or P4.3 billion?

"This is only one contract," Enrile pointed out. "How many billions are we going to borrow to buy out 15 IPP contracts at onerous prices?"

* * *

Today's joke:

**Because of insistent public demand, we will resume the daily jokes here, but only as space permits and as good jokes become available. Here is the first one:**

**Beware, a new, more deadly mutant of SARS is spreading rapidly in the country. It is a movement called "Support Angelo Reyes for Senator."**

## Wealth

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

IT is my misfortune never to have met Armando Malay personally. But I was one of those who read him avidly during the last years of martial law when he wrote for We Forum. And well after, when he continued writing elsewhere. He had an engaging style, combining the personal with the political storytelling with analysis, wit with wisdom. His setting was often a breakfast or dinner with his family, and the conversations they had about life around them. How effective his writing was you knew from the fact that Marcos had him arrested and thrown in jail in 1982 for subverting the republic. Marcos was always confused about the difference between him and the republic. Malay was not.

Over time, from reading him, I caught a glimpse not just of the stark body of the country but of the regal soul of the man. Like any fan, I had the impression I almost knew the object of my adulation personally. That sort of made up for the loss.

I know that Malay first got the epithet, "Dean" when he became UP dean of student affairs in the early 1970s. But I also know that the name stuck for reasons that went beyond people merely getting used to it. He became Dean for exemplifying the best that his calling could be. It was a sign of respect everyone who knew him bestowed on him freely.

I've read some of the outpourings of praise that have gone his way these last few days, many of them from his students. Though I knew he was to journalism what Franz Arcellana was to creative writing—several generations of creative writers passed through Franz—I was still startled to learn how many of those who are now considered pillars of the profession went through him.

Some have spoken of his passion for journalism, of the high standards he set for them, professionally and ethically, which they remember to this day, though some doubtless with private regret after having abandoned them. And some have spoken of his prowess as a raconteur, having no end of stories to tell, which gave them a sense not just of the bare topography of their subject but the landscape of the world they subsequently plunged into.

I myself know enough about him to encourage the new kids on the block to look up to him as the model they want to emulate. No, more than the kids, the adults, many of whom are in media now, and who, if they are their pillars, must suggest that media stand on wobbly foundations. If they cannot emulate, they can at least squirm in the long shadow he casts on them. Two things about the man and his contributions to journalism stand out for me in this respect.

The first is his demonstration that journalism is a lofty calling that demands a lofty mind. To the end, Dean Malay read, a preoccupation, or passion, that seems to have died along with the 20th century. Few people read anymore, least of them journalists. Dean Malay did, showing a depth of curiosity about the world he lived in to rival that of a teenager for whom that world has just begun to unfold. That was how he remained an iconoclast, or indeed a radical, continuing to interrogate the conditions of his life long after even many of his students had resigned themselves to it, or worse, embraced it willingly.

Chato Garcellano hit the nail right on the head when she suggested that Dean Malay proved that radicalism, like youth, was often wasted on the young. Who knows? Even as we speak he may be voicing a protest with someone upstairs over the conditions of life in the afterlife.

To the last, Dean Malay showed that the business of a journalist is not to rub elbows with the people in City Hall, or call them by their first names, it is to ferret out the truth and say it without fear. To the last Dean Malay showed that the business of a journalist is not to preen before the cameras, or worse, to imagine oneself the center of the world because one reads the news from a teleprompter, or still worse, to realize one's fantasy by becoming a senator, it is to dangle an interrogation lamp before the world and oneself and ruthlessly investigate them.

The second is Dean Malay's demonstration that journalism is a lofty calling that demands a lofty heart. Each time I talk before budding writers, some of whom will probably go to media, the question I am asked is, "Can corruption in media ever be curbed?" That normally follows my conceding that media currently reel from it. Well, Dean Malay supplies the answer in full. Yes, it can.

Corruption **can** be stopped. All you have to do is live up to the profession. All you have to do is have the same *malasakit* for the profession, or respect for yourself, as Dean Malay had.

All you have to do is start with the premise, or recognition, that the only wealth you will get in this business is the wealth of ideas, the wealth of friends, and the wealth of respect from the community you have served so faithfully and well. Indeed, that the only wealth you'll get from it is the wealth of a good name, one you can pass on to your children. Or one you will not burden your children with. You cannot envy the progenies of Marcos in that respect.

That was what Dean Malay had. He did not lack for a wealth of ideas. That was evident in the way he wrote, which was joyfully, and the way he lived, which was youthfully. He did not lack for friends. That was evident in the horde, many of them prominent individuals but who could only feel diminutive in his presence even in death, which flocked to his wake. He had the respect of his community. That is evident in the way we recall him even now, with much fondness and a resolve not to forget.

And he left one very good name, one his children and children's children can wear with rightful pride.

You can't be any wealthier than that.

# Will she or will she not?

### POLITICAL TIDBITS

*Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

THERE'S speculation in various media that the President would run in the 2004 elections, contrary to her stunning disavowal of Dec. 30. I have been asked repeatedly about this question, and though I have not had the opportunity to directly ask her about it, my answer is that she definitely appears to be thinking about it quite seriously. One reason is that many of her allies in Congress and local government are egging her to "reconsider" as they confess to being dismayed over the choices presenting themselves for 2004. Their thinking is, *kung iyon lang namang mga pumapapel, ki Gloria na kami ulit*. At least with GMA, they reason, they already know her strong and weak points, and they hope, she has learned a lot of valuable lessons in the past three years.

* * *

**In her recent sortie to Iloilo and Capiz, the President was confronted with streamers begging her to reconsider. There's anxiety in the ruling Lakas that if she does not run, the party would split into several factions, whereas if she does, it would stay united. But to her allies' pleas GMA is said to merely turn on a bright but mysterious smile or give them a pat on the back. Politicians asking First Gentleman Mike Arroyo get a stock answer: ask the President. But I understand many Palace staffers don't want her to run.**

* * *

But actions may be louder than words, a smile or a pat. Newspaper sources report that GMA has been meeting with various allies, asking them to "test the waters." One source was quoted as saying categorically that she has asked select Congress allies to organize groups for a "political purpose." A congressman said GMA has intimated she wants a firmer hold on Lakas' nomination process.

Indeed all these could indicate the President is rethinking plans, though Rep. Abraham Mitra could also be right: she could be merely giving the impression she's running in order not to make her a lameduck President.

* * *

**I would imagine that GMA's decision would depend a great deal on how her state visit to the US turns out. If she brings home a lot of bacon that could stimulate the countryside and Mindanao, GMA might be encouraged. In fact a popular theory is that the *Kano* themselves might prod her to run, as she's their kind of girl. A Central Luzon congressman recently told me that his political group that's allied with GMA will confront her about her plans for 2004 soon after she arrives from the US, and he thinks a big decision would be forthcoming around August.**

* * *

One thing sure, the other candidates are keenly watching GMA's body language and getting nervous. There's talk that Fernando Poe will run if GMA runs. There's also talk that Eduardo Cojuangco won't run if she does. One problem is how she will explain her turnabout, but her congressional and local allies feel that they could defend her decision. Then too, there are the corruption charges being aired against her administration, the First Gentleman and their cronies, and the poor state of the economy. How will these impact on a campaign?

Ultimately the question her strategists will have to answer is, does GMA have a good chance to win in 2004?

* * *

**At the recent class reunion of PMA Class '61, of which he is the most prominent member, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon told me he is for a constitutional convention and not a constituent assembly (Consa), and wants the delegates elected together with national and local officials in 2004. One reason is that he feels the public wouldn't trust the politicians with the all-important task of amending or revising the Constitution. He realizes the fears of Consa advocates: that a convention won't get underway because public officials elected in 2004 won't agree to holding it as it could shorten their term. To avoid this delay, Biazon is filing a resolution in the Senate that would authorize Congress to activate the convention soon after the elections.**

* * *

But will the convention keep the politicians at bay? At the recent Senate hearings conducted by the committee on constitutional amendments and electoral reforms, former House Secretary General Camilo Sabio, now a law professor, testified that he was "a very idealistic young man" when he joined the 1971 Constitutional Convention as a delegate. To his dismay, said Sabio, he soon realized that 90 percent of the convention delegates were professional politicians who were far from being idealistic.

* * *

**Critics of the convention, in fact, are one in saying that while this method is far more expensive than a Consa, there is no certainty its output would be better than that of a Consa. In fact it is believed that delegates to be elected simultaneously with the 2004 elections would be dominated by the wives, children and siblings of the politicians. Why? Because they are the only ones already with a harnessed political machinery. But the difficulty is that these neophytes' learning curve would be far longer than those of sitting members of Congress.**

* * *

When Carolina "Bobbi" Malay, now Ms Satur Ocampo, and I were English majors in the University of the Philippines in Diliman, I became quite close to her parents. In fact when Mommy Malay died, I wrote a little tribute that recalled, among others, her poise and stylishness that her daughter inherited. Recalling Dean Armando Malay, who passed away recently, my thoughts were dominated by one episode that makes me chuckle until now. Five years after graduation I married a young lieutenant from West Point. One day, while walking in the old "Liberal Arts" building, I ran into Dean Malay and leading me by the wide window, he asked me with ill-concealed frustration: "Why in the world did you marry a military man? How could you do that?" I don't recall what answer I gave him, as I was more frightened of this tall stooped man with eyes that can bore into you. My condolences to the Malays over the passing of a legend.

# Where is that 13-year-old?

### AT LARGE

*Rina Jimenez-David*

KNOW any promiscuous 13-year-old girl who would, if she got pregnant, seek out an abortionist without her parents' knowledge or permission? Are there any teenagers out there chafing at the bit and waiting for the passage of HB 4110 or the reproductive health care bill so that they can go ahead and have sex?

I'd really like to meet this proverbial sexually active young teen or these extremely law-abiding adolescents—since opponents of the controversial bill keep bringing them up to illustrate the dangers posed by this piece of legislation. The opponents seem to give HB 4110 more credit than even its authors would claim. I don't think young people are exactly waiting for a law to be passed before they decide to become sexually active. As statistics would show, young people (about 30 percent of them, at least) are having sex—and getting pregnant—regardless of what the law says, with or without their parents' knowledge or permission, and often without protection or even awareness of exactly how sex can lead to pregnancy.

In many cases, sexual initiation is not even the young people's choice, since about 10 percent of young women say they were forced or coerced into their first sexual experience, by their boyfriends or an older male relative.

In such a scenario, I would think reasonable adults would approve or even encourage sex education for young people, as HB 4110 recommends. As studies around the world have proven, knowledge about sexual functions, relationships and responsibilities tends to discourage rather than encourage sexual activity among teens.

As for the pregnant 13-year-old, regardless of who her sexual partner would have been, under the law, she would be the victim of rape. I find it extremely distasteful that so-called "pro-lifers" would use a rape victim's tragedy, even if hypothetical, to feed on every parent's fears while scoring rhetorical points.

* * *

**ANOTHER columnist who shares this space once a month, Antonio Mont[illegible]n, wrote a column last May 12 attacking the proponents of HB 4110 and essentially echoing all the arguments raised by religious leaders and representatives of religious organizations in various hearings on the bill.**

**Dr. Junice Melgar, executive director of Likhaan or Linangan ng Kababaihan, an NGO which provides health services for women in impoverished communities, writes to refute specific points, what she calls Montalvan's "discordant facts," in his column.**

**For one, writes Melgar, "the Reproductive Health Care bill's section on adolescent health upholds young people's right to health information and care. It does not propose that adolescents must be autonomous of their parents."**

**Opponents of HB 4110 urge the public to "read between the lines" when citing the "frightening" possibility of empowered young people having unbridled sex while their disempowered parents look on helplessly. But if a bill were to be shot down based on what is NOT written in it, then how on earth could any legislative measure be signed into law? Affirming young people's right to information and care only means that health professionals are not allowed to discriminate against anyone on the basis of age or marital status. Would the bill "allow" caregivers to perform induced abortion on teenagers without their parents' permission? I don't see how it can, since under our laws, induced abortion—for anyone, even for married adults—is illegal.**

* * *

MONTALVAN then brought up the bogey of American involvement not just in the bill's provenance, but also in funding the groups lobbying for its passage.

Dr. Melgar counters: The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the contraceptive industry are not (and have not been) involved either in the drafting of or lobbying for this bill. "As an avid endorser of the bill since its inception, I know the people who wrote the original and revised drafts and have witnessed its evolution in response to feedback from the many consultations."

Montalvan also tried to connect the drafting of HB 4110 to the decision of the USAID to slow down and eventually end the donation of free contraceptive supplies for use in the public sector. The bill, he said, would save the United States money as it would shift the "responsibility" for providing contraceptives from the US government to the Philippine government. (Where it properly belongs, I might add.)

But even this argument is flawed from the basic facts. "USAID is not withdrawing its contraceptive subsidy to the Philippine government. It is mainly shifting this to the private/commercial sector," clarified Melgar.

* * *

**DR. MELGAR has another issue to raise with Montalvan, who cited the health risks posed by modern contraceptives. "The risk factors attributed to contraceptives are exaggerated and faulty. There is definitely no cause-and-effect relationship between pills and congenital heart disease.**

**The cardiovascular side effects of the hormonal contraceptives are contingent on and specific to the cardiovascular status of the patient...The WHO has regularly included contraceptives in its essential drugs list which is based on necessity and safety."**

**Finally, says Melgar, the Reproductive Health Care bill "aims to address the many reproductive health problems that cause illness and death among Filipino men and women. It is not intended to correct (the problem of) overpopulation.**

**"It is unfortunate that the opposition to the Reproductive Health Care bill has not progressed beyond maligning the supposed intent of the bill. Most unfortunate too that columnists foment discord based on fallacies," she adds.**

# This and that

### SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

*Bambi L. Harper*

BEFORE PINATUBO wreaked havoc on the plains of Central Luzon, I was lucky enough to have visited the town of Bacolor and seen the interior of the Panlilio house. Who would have imagined that over a decade later the furnishings and wide narra floor planks of that once stately ancestral home would be reassembled in a museum in Cavite recreating the ilustrado lifestyle?

Congratulations are in order to De La Salle University president, Bro. Andrew Gonzalez and Joey Panlilio, curator, as well as the donors with the foresight to see that soon, with the culture of "erase-atecture" and government indifference, only museums will be left to preserve vestiges of a Filipino architectural heritage and the decorative arts.

The campus of De La Salle University in Dasmariñas, Cavite is surely one of the loveliest in the country, surrounded by towering trees and lush vegetation. One can only hope that future generations will realize the importance of environmental conservation and not opt to build high rises at the expense of that marvellous greenery. The museum, inspired by the 19th century *bahay na bato*, was constructed in a park-like setting beside a lake. It was patterned after several ancestral homes that are almost gone: the Constantino house in Balagtas, Bulacan which was surely one of the most awesome of those homes situated beside a river and a stone bridge, the Arnedo-Gonzalez house in Sulipan, Apalit, Pampanga described in Felix Roxas' book of essays, and the Santos-Joven-Panlilio house of Bacolor, Pampanga devastated by Pinatubo.

Actually the amassed collection that includes several living room sets, dining tables, lamps, paintings, chandeliers, vases, flower pots and so on could probably fill two more houses of modest size. Today in the *saguan* or ground floor that once would have had stables and storerooms, are displays of costumes from bygone eras as well as a typical *carroza* (that once graced Bacolor processions) from the Panlilio family. It is, we were told, brought out for use during the fiesta of Dasmariñas. Pampanga's loss is now Cavite's gain.

It shouldn't take you more than an hour to get there and is well worth a visit not only for the museum but for that park-like campus. Filipinos growing up these days in their concrete jungle must by now have been conditioned to believe that the dull homogenizing western idea of indiscriminately standardized structures is the zenith of beauty. How environmental conservation is supposed to be taught when the student is boxed in cement in his own school must present a terrific challenge to teachers.

From that memorable visit our group proceeded to Taal Vista Lodge to see how the renovation and improvements were coming along. Obviously both the Cavite officials and the developers are devoid of a shred of interest in architectural heritage. If they had been, the new three-story hotel would at least have paid tribute to the old building's design rather than constructing a shoe-box type structure. Pity, because it does absolutely nothing for the landscape and is visually dull and uninteresting.

In the meantime, while digesting this absolutely dissolute and sinful cheeseburger from "Santis" with a mountain of French, oops, Freedom fries, I got to thinking of my friend Ingrid, who deserves several medals, a National Artist or at least a National Treasure citation. Ingrid is nuts or has to have several screws loose. Of course she did lose 30 pounds in the process and looks gorgeous but that's hardly the point. Sometime in January 2001 Ingrid and another leading US-based pianist, Reynaldo Reyes began a series of concerts starting in Cebu and Davao. Then they got more ambitious and went on to Tuguegarao, Iligan and Virac. If that wasn't enough on their third tour they traveled to Leyte, Lanao del Norte, Misamis Oriental, Bohol, Cebu, Negros Occidental, Iloilo, Antique and Manila.

Thank heaven they've got Sen. Ramon Magsaysay helping them when they resume their "Romantic Piano Concerto Journey" (refers to the music selections of Beethoven, Grieg, Rachmaninoff, Saint-Saens, Schumann and Tchaikovsky). This time, from June 12 to the 30th, the duo performs in Subic, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija and Metro Manila. They will also be playing before that in Los Angeles, California. Last year they played in Bangkok, Florida and Baltimore. You might have guessed by now that the two must love playing the piano and have this inordinate desire to share it with others, especially young people.

Ingrid and Rey actually go on tour twice a year and have so far traveled to 40 cities, towns and schools in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao (many times sleeping on the bus). The troupe has reached 55,000 listeners, possibly more, through television. Even if I think she's nuts, you cannot fault the desire to share her love of classical music. After each performance, even if she has only managed to catch a few hours of sleep, a question-and-answer forum follows as part of the education process.

In a short span of time Ingrid and Rey will offer 29 concerts of Western and Filipino composers like Abelardo, Cayabyab, Buencamino and Santiago in 18 different towns and expect audiences totaling 40,000. She says it isn't only her time and effort that she offers but her very being. (And all the while having to lug two concert pianos around!) Now wouldn't you be proud to have a friend like that? I know I am.

# Typecasting

ONE of the tragedies of life is typecasting. Our sex, color, height, weight, education, place of residence, even birthdate puts us in a category like a species in the animal kingdom. For example, you are not only Homo Sapiens Sapiens. You may be Homo Sapiens Sapiens Femalia Asiana Lasalista Cebuana Pandakae.

Not only are we typecast because of what we were born with or where we were born, things that are beyond our control. We are also typecast by the things that were brought about by our choices. You like Vilma, therefore you are a Vilmanian. You believe in Mike Velarde, therefore you are an El Shaddai member. You prefer McDonald's over Jollibee, Pizza Hut over Greenwich, Starbucks over Figaro. And your every choice includes the attitude and stereotypes of people who have the same choice as yours. As that Globe ad goes, "Are you one of us?"

### YOUNG BLOOD

*Salome Flores*

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.*

As for me, my job is a result of things I can and can't control. I am in the advertising industry. It is an industry where words and numbers converge, two things I am an expert at. Of course there are other disciplines that combine these two unlikely skills: there's the education industry, economics, business administration. Even engineering is starting to be largely about research writing. But I chose advertising.

Many would disagree with me, and would accuse me of being a typecaster myself, but I would dare say that one of the pitfalls of a woman in the advertising industry, besides the scarcity of eligible bachelors, is that she is bound to have a difficult family life. I've heard countless stories of single moms, women with annulled marriages, or single women with children but opting not to marry the sperm donor.

They say that this has been an effect of the job itself: whether you are in media planning or the creative side, the job requires time, lots of it. Account managers and brand managers know no Saturdays or Sundays, they are not bound by Metro Manila or even the Philippines itself. Twenty-four hours are often not enough. Turning off your cellphone is a-no-no, losing it is a tragedy. But I suppose this i true of a lot of jobs, especially if you love it.

And when you give time for your job, you're bound to give up time for something else. The usual casualty is the family.

You can even say it's a lot like show business. Besides, the advertising industry is closely related to that industry anyway. And look at how our showbiz stars' lives are.

So now.. we talk about me. Seems like I have been eaten by the system myself. I am about to live up to the typecast. In four months, I will be one of THEM. I am pregnant and unmarried, and well on my way to single motherhood.

But my choice was not a function of lack of time. It wa pride. And I could argue that it is another thing I share with many other women in my social circle.

My reasons are fairly simple. Perhaps a lot of other women would agree with me. I know I am smart. I know I am capable. I know that marrying against my will and against the interest of my child would not only be pointless but stupid. I am 25 and I also know that I want this child because she is my own.

And I believe that I echo the reasons of many other single moms before me. It is unimaginably difficult to raise a child on your own but it has been done before, with satisfying results. Cliché-ish as it may sound, trying to undo a wrong with another wrong (marriage, in this case) would lead to disaster. And that has led me to where I am now.

But I resist the stereotype. I sincerely want a family, like the one I came from. With a father and a mother and maybe three or four kids. I can deal with single motherhood now but I don't want it to be a permanent thing. But then again, I can't say that other single moms in the advertising industry would want otherwise. Besides, who doesn't want to be in a happy family?

I have thought of leaving the industry, to move to a discipline that is more family friendly, like being a simple entrepreneur or a teacher. My dream job is not to be vice president or managing director, but a stay-at-home mom. Like my mom. But I'm starting to think that it would be easier for me to run a company than to raise well-mannered, God-fearing children. But I still dream.

And that's something you can't put in a category, because everyone dreams. Everybody wants a better life. Everybody wants to be themselves.

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*Salome Flores is a media specialist with GMA 7 and a freelance writer for a women's magazine.*

### THEY SAID

## No quorum

"It was obvious that there was no quorum, because anyone familiar with House proceedings would know that at midnight you could count on your fingers the number of congressmen who would care to be present."

***—Sen. Joker Arroyo on the date when concurrent resolution seeking to amend the Constitution was passed***

## No concessions

"The government should not allow itself to be blackmailed into granting concessions to the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front."

***—Rep. Prospero Pichay urging government to stop peace talks with the MILF after it attacked a civilian community***

## Not mollified

"The Lopez group cannot flaunt this reduction to escape public rage and condemnation."

***—Militant group Anakpawis secretary general Cherry Clemente on the P0.18/kWh cut in the purchase power adjustment***

## Can't be omnipresent

"We could not be everywhere, every time."

***—PNP Director Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane on not pinning the blame to the military and police for the bombing that killed nine people***

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# How Canada updates its voters' list

I READ with interest the opinion piece of Solita Collas-Monsod that appeared on Inq7.net last May 10, 2003, entitled "A waste of taxpayer's money."

I agree that public money must be spent prudently and responsibly. I firmly believe that a country like the Philippines could be recognized by the leaders it elects. I believe as well in instituting reforms in the Philippines election process especially computerization to reduce dramatically, if not eliminate, fraud totally.

Why does the Philippines not follow or study efficient election process like Canada's and adapt what are appropriate to its election system? A very good example is the Registry List in Canada. There are several ways of adding your name or updating your information on the list. When I submit my income tax return to Revenue Canada, included in the form is a box where Election Canada asks permission to use the information to update my addresses and record name changes on its Registry List.

This could serve at least two purposes in the Philippines: update the list and, more importantly, allow only those who file income tax returns to vote. In Canada you are required by law to submit your income tax return, regardless of whether you earned any income or not.

We always complain about the *masa* voting on the basis of personality. I believe that once you submit your income tax, you become more involved in the careful selection of your leaders. You want to make sure public funds are not wasted by the elected officials.

I hope this will be added to the long list of suggestions to clean up the elections in the Philippines.

**—ENRIQUE MALLARI,**
**Scarborough, Ontario, Canada**

# Private fund to help fight SARS

I HAVE been home exactly a week now as I write.

Upon my arrival from Singapore, a daughter who works as a nurse at the Makati Medical Center picked me up, with a mask ready for me to use. Because I had stayed a month in a SARS- infected country, she put me on a five-day voluntary quarantine even though she had given me an anti-flu vaccine before I left.

After hearing on TV that there was no crematory where an old man who dies of SARS may be taken, I knew how helpless our Department of Health is in controlling the epidemic.

The health secretary said there were sufficient funds to fight the spread of the disease. So why not set aside some money to defray the cost of repairing the San Lazaro crematorium? Otherwise, the government should have used an iron hand to make some private crematorium do the job in support of a most urgent safety problem.

We are praying to be spared from the disease, but we don't seem to appreciate the risks being taken by health personnel and the medical teams attending to the SARS victims.

For a time, Singaporeans made the same mistake. They were treating the nurses and other health workers like lepers, until the hospital staff voiced their complaints and explained their extremely difficult situation. Then the people realized that the health workers were doing a heroic job, and letters of apology, thanksgiving and admiration started coming out. The people raised two million Singapore dollars in a fund-raising campaign, an amount that was matched by the government.

Being 62, out of business and out of job, I can only offer my mind, heart, hands and soul to a similar effort to raise funds for our health workers handling SARS victims or the communities that may be placed under quarantine on account of SARS cases.

**—TESSIE M. CANTA,**
**4-Kagawad Barangay 636,**
**Zone 64, District VI**

# Rangoon creepers and rain lilies

## PINOY KASI

*Michael L. Tan*

BROWSE through American and European gardening magazines and you'll find articles after article gushing about tropical plants. The other day I picked up one magazine with a cover story extolling the virtues of slipper orchids with advice on caring that was almost as detailed as tips on raising a child. A few minutes later, I passed by a *tiangge* with plant dealers and they were selling exactly the same slipper orchids for about a hundred pesos each, together with even cheaper vandas and dendrobiums that would cost an arm and a leg in the west.

You hear *"orkid,"* pronounced with a local accent and what comes to mind are sidewalk vendors, hawking them for as low as P10 each (okay, so that's in Davao City). Say "orchid" with an American accent, no, make it "o-khid" in the Queen's English, and you think of expensive greenhouse varieties. "Slipper orchids" evoke the sultry and sensual, while *Paphiopedilum*, its scientific genus name, makes these orchids sound almost grand, the object of some National Geographic expedition.

I know that humans tend to want things that are exotic so we crave for temperate climate plants while westerners will build entire greenhouses to grow orchids and palms and other tropical plants that we hardly notice, or that may not even have names.

Lately, our plant dealers have started attaching name labels to their plants, sometimes with foreign-sounding names. As far as I'm concerned, that's fine if it'll help promote an appreciation of tropical plants.

Plain old sampaguita sounds a bit less ordinary when you use "jasmine," yes, the very same jasmine you find in the tea. Permit me one quick digression as I point out that connoisseurs scoff at jasmine tea, which is inferior tea leaves with the scent of dried jasmine buds used to distract mask the tea's low quality. But "jasmine tea" appeals, especially to westerners, because of clever marketing, jasmine flowers and Chinese tea playing on notions of the mysterious Orient.

Back to the flowers, the other day one plant dealer was trying to sell me star jasmine and Nicaraguan jasmine, but sometimes far-away names get me nervous because I have doubts about their survival. I imagined myself having to read it revolutionary Sandinista poetry to get Nicaraguan jasmine to thrive. My *suki* plant dealer, always quick to sense when my mind gallops off, assured me that these plants, notwithstanding their names, were as hardy as our own sampaguita.

Meanwhile, the dealer next door was tempting me with his Rangoon creeper. Five *lang*, he offered. Jumping jasmines, I thought, P500? The plant, as its name goes, has swarmed all over the walls at my parents' place and I was imagining Ninoy Aquino bills fluttering from their vines.

My parents' Rangoon creepers come from seeds I brought back from Bicol many years ago, while researching on medicinal plants. The plant is common in rural areas, its seeds used as a dewormer, and their coconut-like flavor giving them their name niyog-niyogan. City people don't use the plants for deworming; what's attractive are their flowers, which exude a faint but pleasant scent when night falls.

The Rangoon creepers go well with the bougainvillea, another tropical plant westerners would die for. Again, *"bongobilya"* makes it sound pedestrian, unless you become creative and describe the varieties, as horticultural magazines do, by their colors: lavender, salmon, orange fiesta, hot magenta.

We talk of *flores de Mayo* because the summer heat, with afternoon rains, bring out a most spectacular of nature's shows, with bougainvillea leading the way. No wonder it has a scientific name of *Bougainvillea spectabilis*. Do take advantage of the *flores de Mayo* to get out of the house and learn to identify the plants by their local and "imported" names.

Those no-name wild lilies by the roadside that come alive each summer with paired flowers are orange *lirios*. A distant relative of orange *lirios* are the *cebollitas* (literally, little onions) which bloom all year round with petite rose or white flowers. They're also called rain lilies. There's an amazing variety of wild lilies out dis I found a plant growing out of a discarded plastic trash can and when I looked up the plant in a botany book it turned out it was called Madonna lily, as well as Amazon lily.

Gumamela, a common roadside plant with many varieties and colors, sounds almost like they come from an English country garden when you call them hibiscus. Still another plant that does well on its own is *tsitsirika*, but plant dealers now offer them as *"Vinca,"* the scientific name. My medical students are always amazed to learn these plants are the source of the anti-leukemia drug vincristine.

Walk down Palma Hall's corridors at UP, past trees with pink and white flowers, and you can smell the English name of *kalatsutsi*: *frangipani*. I always warn the students not to use *kalatsutsi* to court someone because Filipinos associate them with funerals. Stick to orchids, but be warned: the flowers' name is derived from the Greek *orchis*, which means balls and I don't mean the ones you dribble.

The UP campus also has rows of splendid trees with red and orange flowers, with dynamic Spanish names: *caballero* (a young man, with connotations of showmanship) or *arbol de fuego* (fire trees). Spanish names are always so evocative: think of the *bandera Espanola, corazon de amor, cadena de amor*. All those are again common wild plants.

I could go and on, but I think you get my point. We need to better appreciate plants that have been with us for centuries, many introduced by our Asian neighbors, or from central America through the galleon trade. Each plant carries a potential lesson in history and folklore, waiting to be retold and passed on.

Many ritzy hotels, resorts and restaurants are discovering the beauty of tropical plants and using them for interior décor: tsitsirika flowers in a silver bowl of water, for example, or a solitary cattleya orchid in a crystal vase.

When I hear guests oohing and aahing over the flower arrangements while dining on their hibiscus salads and lemongrass with fragrant screwpine tea (translation: *tanglad* and *pandan*), I wonder if, driving in, they noticed these plants growing free and wild by the roadside.

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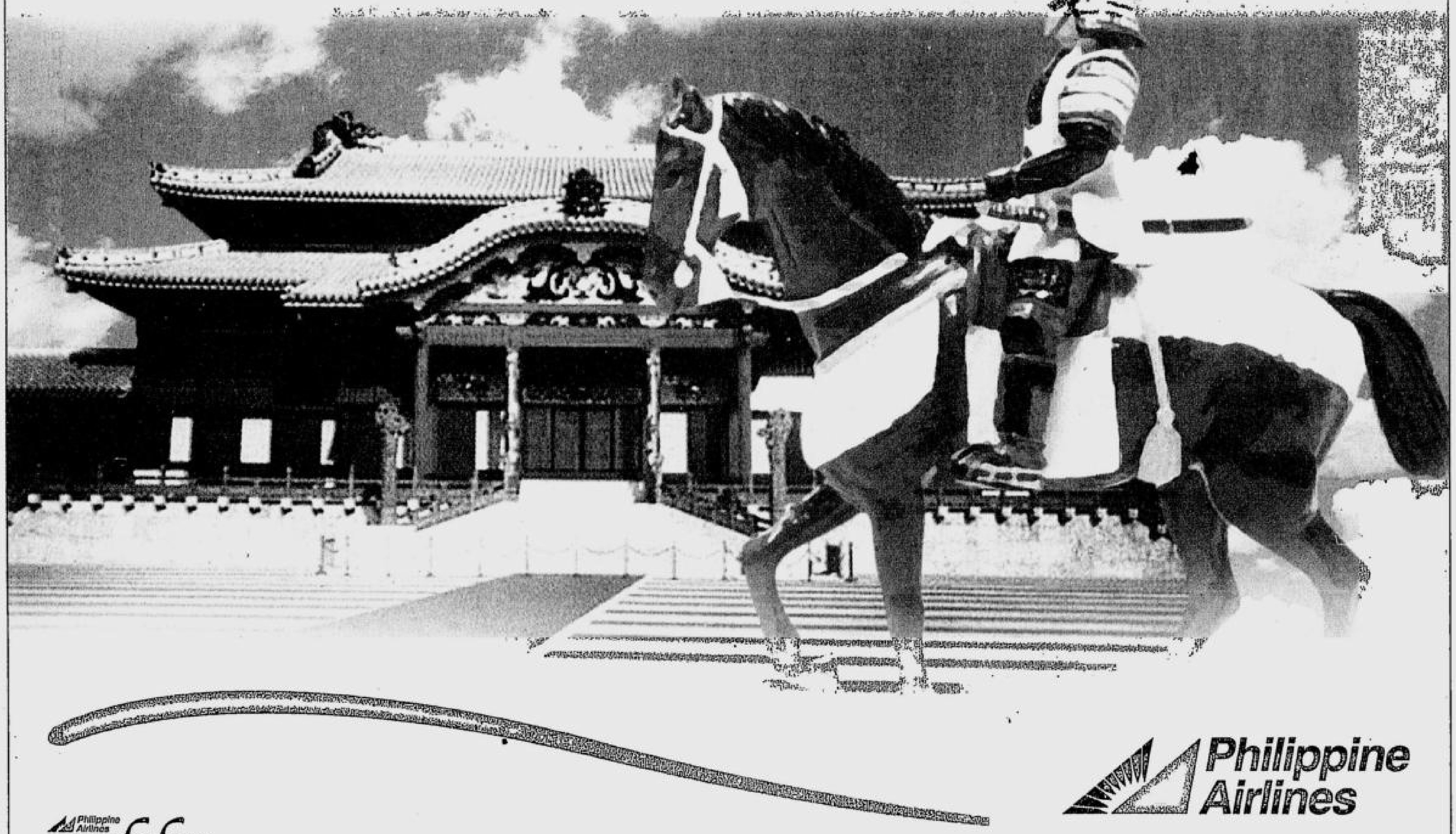

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# The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

**TAIWAN** President Chen Shui-bian, wears a face mask in public for the first time before making a speech at the opening of the island's first hospital dedicated to the treatment of SARS on May 19. REUTERS

# 4 new SARS deaths in HK

**HONG KONG—Another four people have died in Hong Kong after contracting SARS, while one new case of the disease—the lowest daily figure since the outbreak began—has been recorded, health officials said Monday.**

The victims of the pneumonia-like respiratory illness included two men and two women, aged between 32 and 94, bringing the total number of deaths to 251 from 1,714 infections.

Two of the victims suffered chronic illness, said Dr. Liu-Shao-haei, senior executive manager of the Hospital Authority.

Dr. Liu said the latest new case involved a 4-month-old baby girl—the youngest since the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak.

She is believed to have caught the disease from a member of her family.

Dr. Liu said the baby girl was hospitalized with symptoms of SARS on May 13 and was only confirmed as having the illness on Sunday.

"The baby and five other members of her family have all been confirmed to have SARS," he said.

Dr. Liu did not elaborate, but added that all were in hospital in a "stable" condition.

Monday's single new case was the lowest daily infection figure since March 27 when records of SARS cases were first made available, Hong Kong's director of health Margaret Chan said at the press briefing.

Monday was also the 16th consecutive day that Hong Kong's daily infections were in single digits.

"This will be helpful in negotiating with the World Health Organization to lift its advisory warning on travel against Hong Kong it imposed on April 2," said Chan.

At the height of SARS outbreak, a peak of 80 new cases were recorded on March 31, with the death toll reaching a high of 12 on April 19, April 27 and April 29. *AFP*

# Drug lords out to kill Thai PM —US Embassy

BANGKOK—The US government has warned that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra could become a target of assassination, a source said yesterday.

In a written warning made through the US Embassy here, American authorities said certain elements that stand to lose from the government's war on drugs were planning to take the prime minister's life, said a source in the Thaksin administration.

**THAKSIN**

Thai intelligence agencies and the National Security Council were informed of the warning last week, according to the source.

Special Branch Police chief Lt. Gen. Jumpol Mungmai said yesterday that police would not take any chances, even about "old reports" that drug dealers in the North had offered Baht 80 million for the prime minister's life. Thaksin's new war against organized crime gang bosses could further upset several of them, he added.

Security has been heightened for the prime minister over the past week and Thaksin said on Saturday security agencies advised him to avoid large public gatherings.

His schedule was changed Sunday as the premier left for Pattaya to attend a mobile Cabinet meeting Monday. Thaksin left his home at in a bulletproof van. Previously, he was scheduled to join other Cabinet members on a bus that was to leave for the Pattaya meeting from Government House.

*The Nation/Asia News Network*

**A POSTER** in Hanoi commemorates 113th birth anniversary of Ho Chi Minh, founder of modern day communist Vietnam. AFP

# Vietnam celebrates Uncle Ho's birthday

HANOI—Vietnam celebrated Monday the 113th anniversary of the birth of late president Ho Chi Minh, founding father of the Vietnamese Communist Party, revolutionary hero and the country's most revered figure.

State-run newspapers carried front page pictures and editorials eulogizing the small, whiskered man who led the struggle against Japanese occupation, French colonial rule and American intervention.

Red and gold banners hung throughout the capital proclaimed "President Ho Chi Minh lives for ever in our cause."

On Sunday, Communist Party head Nong Duc Manh inaugurated a towering 18-meter granite statue of Uncle Ho—as he is affectionately known—in Vinh, the provincial capital of Nghe An, around 350 km south of Hanoi. *AFP*

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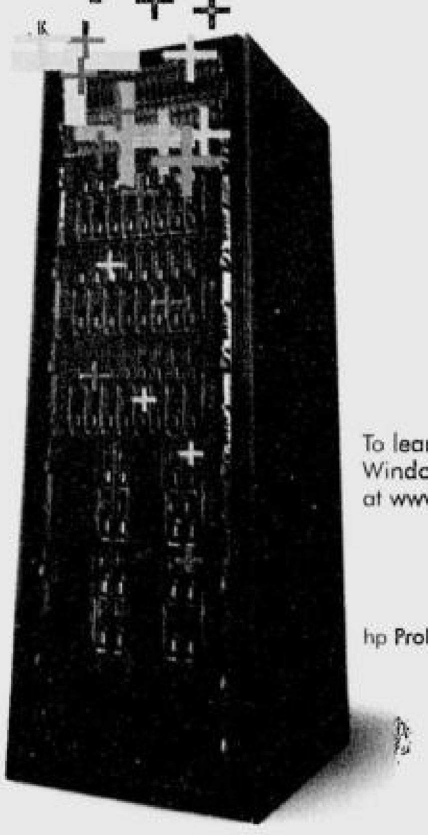

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# Indonesia begins Aceh military offensive

## *Megawati declares province-wide martial law after peace talks collapse*

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—Indonesia's military launched rocket attacks on rebel bases in Aceh on Monday and troops parachuted in as a big offensive got under way just hours after the president put the province under martial law.

Smoke rose from hills after two war planes swooped low over a rise, not far from the airport at the local capital, Banda Aceh.

Hercules transport planes dropped hundreds of troops near the airport. Laden with heavy packs, many took defensive positions in fields. Officials also said around 700 fresh marines had come ashore near the industrial town of Lhokseumawe.

Just after midnight on Sunday, President Megawati Sukarnoputri gave the go-ahead for war against the rebels after last-ditch peace talks in Tokyo collapsed, leaving a landmark peace pact welcomed by Aceh's four million people in tatters.

Military chief Gen. Endriartono Sutarto had clear instructions for his troops as they embarked on one of their biggest campaigns since the 1975 invasion of East Timor.

"Their job is to destroy the armed forces of GAM through to their roots," Sutarto said, referring to the Free Aceh Movement.

He said the military had detected key GAM leadership sites and early operations were aimed at taking those out. The overall aim was to reduce GAM to its "smallest unit" within six months.

In Banda Aceh, 1,700 km northwest of Jakarta, there was little sign of martial law as children went to school, shops opened, and cars and motorbikes jostled for space on roads.

Tengku Muhammad, 47, said Acehnese felt helpless and prayed that the war would not be long and costly to human life.

"Everyone in Aceh is in fear, I have resigned myself to God," said the trader, wearing an olive green Muslim shirt and sarong as he leaned against a pillar inside the city's grand mosque.

Megawati said GAM's refusal to give up its 27-year demand for independence gave her no option but to declare martial law.

Her increasingly tough stance —not a total surprise considering her nationalist roots—has won praise among ordinary Indonesians and should be a boost going into the country's first direct presidential election next year.

It also confirms the military's inside track on national decision-making after several years of keeping a relatively low profile. The Armed Forces' image was tarnished under the authoritarian President Suharto, who stepped down in 1998. *Reuters*

**BATTLE-READY.** Indonesian marines atop an amphibious armored vehicle are in war-footing upon their arrival at Samalanga in Aceh province, Monday, May, 19. Indonesian attack planes fired rockets Monday at a rebel base in Aceh province, signaling the start of a major military offensive just hours after the breakdown of peace talks in Tokyo and the imposition of martial law. AP

## *'Crime against humanity'*

AMROZI AFP

DENPASAR, Indonesia—Indonesian prosecutors on Monday described the Bali terror bombings as "a crime against humanity" as the trial of the first suspect resumed under tight security.

Amrozi could face a firing squad if convicted on four counts under an antiterror law which was rushed through a week after last October's bombings and was made retroactive to cover the crime, AFP reported.

He told Australia's Channel Nine television Sunday he was happy with the attacks on two nightspots, which killed 202 people from 21 countries, and was ready for the death penalty.

Defense lawyers said their client should go free because a retroactive law violates the criminal code.

"Retroactivity is necessary because the Bali bombing is an extraordinary crime or crime against humanity," said prosecutor Urip Tri Gunawan, rebutting defense arguments raised at the opening session last week.

Police have said the Jemaah Islamiah regional terror group staged the attack on "soft" Western-frequented targets to avenge perceived injustice to Muslims worldwide.

*Jakarta Post/Asia News Network*

# Flash floods kill 125 in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—A weekend of flash floods and landslides killed up to 125 people in south-central Sri Lanka, officials said, while forecasters warned more rain was on its way.

About 150,000 people have fled their homes from the areas, officials said. They are being housed in temples, schools and public buildings.

Local officials in Ratnapura, Hambabtota and Matara, reached by telephone, said 78 bodies had been recovered and that 47 others were believed killed in a landslide that wiped out an entire village, which would bring the toll to 125.

Officials said they expected that toll to rise.

In Matara, local police official Abhaya Gunawardene said an additional 16 people were missing there.

The state-run Daily News, quoting government officials, earlier reported a death toll of 141. It was not clear whether that toll included the 16 missing people cited by Gunawardene.

Neighboring India was sending a rescue helicopter and a relief ship with medicine, food, water and health officials. These were expected to arrive later Monday, said Indian High Commission spokesperson Reenat Sandhu.

The police chief in Ratnapura, Prasanna Nanayakkara, said road links with the capital had been restored and that water was receding from some areas. He said about a dozen police teams have been dispatched to remote areas to look for survivors.

"It appears that the worst is over for now unless it rains heavily again," he said. "Light vehicles can now pass though, there are patches where we still have mud and slit."

The Department of Meteorology warned of new rain Monday. "There will be occasional showers accompanied by fairly strong winds," it said. *AP*

# Antiterror experts gather in Sydney

SYDNEY—More than 400 antiterrorism experts from 13 countries met in Australia Monday to share strategies and techniques amid a surge in attacks attributed to the al-Qaida movement.

"All of us have great concern about the apparent resurgence in the al-Qaida bombings," Charles Prouty of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation said during the gathering in the Gold Coast resort area.

"No matter how careful you are, no matter how many precautions you take or how hard you work at it, there is always a chance someone is going to get through," said Prouty.

The five-day meeting which opened Sunday followed a week of major bombings in Saudi Arabia and Morocco that killed dozens of people and were blamed on Osama bin Laden's radical Islamic group al-Qaida.

The attacks prompted new terrorism alerts focusing on Southeast Asia and East Africa.

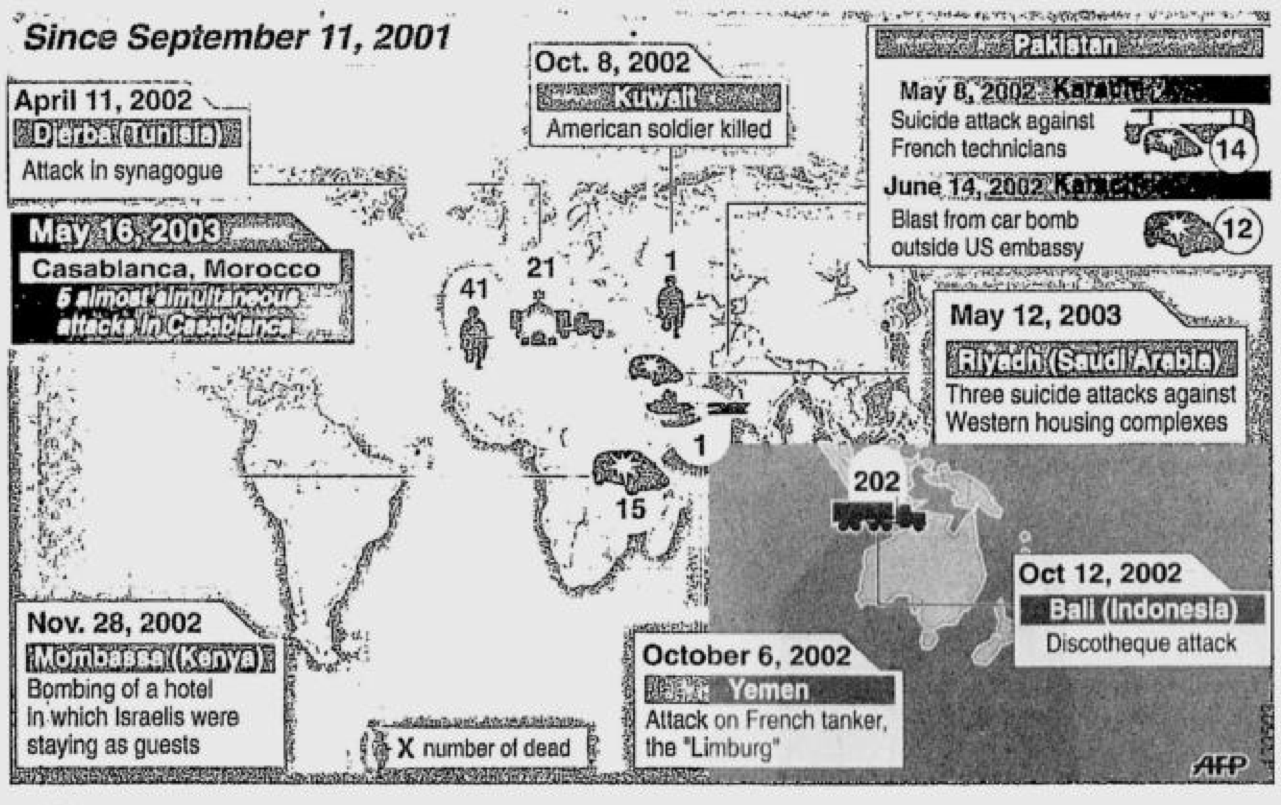
"This is a very dangerous group and they do have tentacles throughout the world," Prouty said of al-Qaida.

The US law enforcement official said sharing investigative strategy and techniques was one the aims of the high-level Gold Coast meeting.

On Tuesday Australian police officials will brief participants on the progress of their investigation into the October 2002 car bombings on the Indonesian resort island of Bali which killed 202 people, 88 of them Australian.

Australian Police Commissioner Mick Keelty told the conference on Monday that there had been several new arrests in the Bali case that has disrupted activities of the Jemaah Islamiah. *AFP*

### Terrorist attacks around the world



## WORLDBRIEFS

### China, India resolving Sikkim issue

NEW DELHI—As Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee gets set to visit China next month, Beijing appears ready to give ground on the thorny issue of the sovereignty of the state of Sikkim, a report said Monday. China, which strongly opposed the merger of the Himalayan province with India in 1975, has been signaling since the late 1990s that it was ready to acknowledge Indian sovereignty over Sikkim, the Hindu newspaper said. *AFP*

### Sharon cancels US trip

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon insisted late Sunday he sought a just solution with Palestinian leaders despite a double suicide attack in Jerusalem that killed seven people plus the bombers. After canceling a pivotal trip to Washington, Sharon held an emergency meeting of his cabinet which concluded with a statement saying he was determined to achieve peace with the Palestinians. The prime minister "is determined to make progress and eventually achieve quiet, security and genuine peace and all the things which stem from these things," the statement said. *AFP*

### Koreas begin economic meeting

SEOUL—South and North Korea will begin their four-day economic talks in Pyongyang today to discuss measures to implement bilateral economic cooperation projects, Unification Ministry officials said yesterday. The North agreed Saturday to push ahead with the planned talks, eschewing concerns that the communist country may cancel the talks after potentially being upset by the outcome of the summit between President Roh Moo-hyun and US President George W. Bush in Washington last week.

*The Korea Herald/Asia New Network*

### Malaysia to buy Russian fighter jets

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia has in principle agreed to buy 18 Russian-made fighter jets worth about $900million (Ringgit 3.4B) to enhance the capabilities of the Royal Malaysian Air Force. Defense Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the purchase of Sukhoi SU-30MKM aircraft, scheduled to be delivered in stages beginning mid 2006, would pave the way for bilateral military and combat collaboration. "We have decided that the Sukhoi model is most suitable and the aircraft have modified technical specifications which meet our requirements," he said in a press conference after receiving a courtesy call from his Russian counterpart Sergei Ivanov at the Defense Ministry yesterday. *The Star of Malaysia/Asia News Network*

# *SARS, anti-smoking treaty main agenda in WHO meeting*

GENEVA—The annual assembly of the World Health Organization's 192 member states begins on Monday with the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the adoption of a landmark treaty to fight smoking dominating the agenda in the first week, officials said.

The meeting from May 19 to 28 is also expected to be marked by the election of the nominee for the top post at WHO, Jong Wook Lee of South Korea, after director general Gro Harlem Brundtland decided not to seek a second five-year term.

WHO officials have said they will try to take advantage of the presence of health ministers here to bolster international cooperation to tackle health problems and new diseases expected to emerge in the 21st century.

They said attempts to control the SARS virus, which swiftly spread around the world after it emerged from China and Hong Kong several months ago, are a model for future efforts to stifle contagious diseases.

More than 590 people have died from SARS with 7,600 cases in 29 countries since the pneumonia-like disease emerged for the first time, mainly in Asia.

All participants at the meeting in Geneva—including ministers, health experts, WHO staff and journalists—will be asked to account for their contacts with suspected SARS patients.

Delegates have been asked not to travel to Geneva if they have been in close contact with a SARS patient or been to a hospital treating the disease in the preceding ten days, the WHO said.

"It's a rule that applies to everybody, we know that SARS is able to travel," spokesperson Christine McNab told journalists.

"We are recommending the same measures for all major international gatherings," she added.

The assembly will also be asked to adopt a new treaty imposing curbs on the advertising, marketing and sale of cigarettes and tobacco products, following four years of sometimes bitter negotiations.

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control was championed by Brundtland and will be the first global treaty committing governments to deal with a public health issue.

Officials said they expected the Convention would be adopted on Wednesday despite outstanding opposition from the United States and Germany to a limited advertising ban.

Other issues up for debate at the health assembly include Taiwan's decades old bid to overcome Chinese opposition to its membership of the UN health agency, tackling mental health problems and tropical disease control, especially in poor countries. *AFP*

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# Across the NATION

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## Jeep falls into river; 10 killed

LEGAZPI CITY—Ten persons, including five children, died and 14 others were injured when the jeep they were riding in developed mechanical trouble while negotiating an uphill road and rolled backward, plunging into a river at 8:15 a.m. on Sunday in Tinambac, Camarines Sur.

PO3 Arnold Gorom of the Police Community Relations Office in Camarines Sur said those who died on the spot as Gloria Agor, 47; Romeo Agor, 7; Lyka Quinones, 4; Joel Capal, 7; Joel Angelo Capal, 1; Donatela Mendez, 75; a certain Jun Ubalde; one named Urosan, about 20; and two still unidentified victims.

Mendez died on the way to the Tinambac Community Hospital.

Seriously injured were Alvarez Alidia; Aljo Leron, 9 months; Nila Perez, 3; Sardinia Premavera; Evelyn Gapan; Princess Jane Sapi; Solano Progada; Emilita Caballero; Sosimo Nual; Emily, Deo, Efren Sr. and Efren Jr., all surnamed Quiñones; and Ruben Villanueva.

The victims were all from Tinambac town.

Gorom said the jeep, with license plate No. DVN 157, was fully loaded with passengers. Upon reaching an uphill road at Sitio Hologan in Barangay Camagong, it developed mechanical trouble and fell into the Pasongsongan River.

The survivors were brought to the Tinambac Community Hospital and later moved to the Bicol Medical Center in Naga City.

The driver, Tongtong de la Torre, fled after the incident and had yet to appear before police authorities. *Ronnie Lorejo and Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

# Gov't takes over Imelda estate

By Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

**TOLOSA, Leyte—The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) yesterday took over the sprawling Olot Estate claimed by Imelda Romualdez Marcos as her family's "ancestral home."**

But the takeover was not without tension as Chino Romualdez, 46, a nephew of the former first lady's, questioned the move of the PCGG representatives.

Speaking through his lawyer, Oliver Lozano, Romualdez maintained that the contested property belonged not only to the Marcos widow but to the other members of the clan as well.

"He is claiming his right to the Olot property as one of its compulsory heirs," Lozano said.

The lawyer explained that the Supreme Court's ruling, restraining the widow of former strongman Ferdinand Marcos from taking control of the property, was "only directed to Mrs. Marcos and not to other members of the Romualdez family."

Romualdez is laying his claim to the property as son of Vicente Romualdez, a cousin of Mrs. Marcos', the lawyer said.

Romualdez, a "job-order" employee at the Tacloban City government, detailed at the office of his uncle Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez Sr., declined to comment. A job-order employee is hired on a per-work basis. The contract usually runs for two months and is renewed depending on whether the work has been completed or not.

It was not clear what Romualdez's job was at the mayor's office.

The mayor earlier said he would not directly get involved in the legal battle because it was his elder sister's job to do so.

Edgardo Urieta, the Sandiganbayan sheriff tasked by the Supreme Court with serving the temporary restraining order, reminded Lozano that the High Tribunal's resolution was not only addressed to the former first lady "but to all representatives of Mrs. Marcos."

"He (Chino) belongs to the Romualdez family . . . that makes him a representative of the former first lady," Urieta said.

Sensing that his argument would lead to nowhere, Lozano, on Romualdez's instructions, drafted an agreement that set two conditions before they accepted a copy of the TRO. These were to allow any members of the Romualdez family to continue their rehabilitation work in the beach-front property and for them to get inside and use the estate.

The conditions were accepted by Renoir Dauag, PCGG regional representative, and his assistant, Salvador de la Paz; Teresito Javier, director for sequestered properties, and lawyer Elvin Cruz, special counsel.

When Mrs. Marcos took control of the property in October 2002, she immediately directed repairs of the 45-hectare property, which consists of a nine-hole golf course, a swimming pool, residential and guesthouses, a pavilion and a Romualdez mausoleum.

"The PCGG is now taking control and possession of the property effective (Monday). We were able to attain our objective," Cruz said.

Also present during the takeover were Senior Supt. Panfilo Ovejas, police regional for operations; lawyer George Almaden, police regional legal officer; and Olot Barangay Chair Artemio Cinco.

The Supreme Court, in its April 28 decision, directed Mrs. Marcos and her representatives to honor the TRO it issued on Dec. 22, for the family to surrender control of the property.

It also directed the sheriff of the Sandiganbayan and Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, PNP chief, to implement the order and even arrest Mrs. Marcos or her representative if they would not heed the order.

When she visited Tacloban on May 2, Mrs. Marcos said she would not give up the property that she claimed to be a "sacred ground."

She said she was willing to "die" defending the estate. But with the possibility of her being cited for contempt, the former first lady decided to temporarily yield.

**Countdown for Justice**

**WAPILE**

IT IS exactly 372 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

### WHO'S TO BLAME?

# Politicians trade charges over radioman's slay

**By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

LUCENA CITY—Even as police investigators have yet to identify any suspect yet in the murder of local radioman Apolinario "Polly" Pobeda, politicians continue to exchange sharp tirades and accusations on who is to blame for the killing.

Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. has accused Pobeda's boss, Joselito Ojeda, former Mulanay town mayor and president of ConAmor Broadcasting System, of being involved in the killing.

"Mr. Ojeda made Polly a sacrificial lamb to further agitate my constituents and totally ruin my personal life and political career," Talaga told newsmen here.

Ojeda let out a big laugh when told of the accusation. "What will I gain? Come on, tell me, what will I gain?" he said in a cellular phone interview.

"I have no political interest here in Lucena City and even in the second congressional district. I have plans to reenter politics but only as far as aspiring again for the mayoral post of Mulanay," he added.

Senior Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Quezon police chief, admitted that investigators had no suspect yet. "But we're looking at every angle," he said.

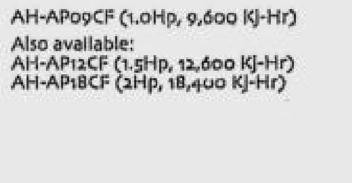
Two unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle shot and killed Pobeda while he was on his way to the station on his own motorcycle Saturday morning. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Talaga alleged that he paid P200,000 monthly to Ojeda's radio station dwTI-AM as avenue for his political propaganda during the recall election campaign against then Mayor Bernard Tagarao.

He said the program was anchored by broadcaster Benjie Calvelo, a radio commentator who is publicly identified with the chief executive.

Ojeda countered that all transactions and money payment between his station and Talaga during the recall election campaign were all supported with corresponding documents like contracts and receipts.

Talaga and Ojeda used to be the best of political allies since both of them belonged to the Lakas party. But after the recall election, the relationship turned sour and bitter.



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# Coalition to stop NPA 'extortion' urged

LEGAZPI CITY—Business and local government leaders are putting up a coalition to end alleged rampant extortion activities conducted by communist rebels and enhance the business climate in the region.

According to the military, the New People's Army (NPA), armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has already collected millions of pesos in "revolutionary taxes," especially from local businesses.

The Albay Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Regional Executives and Directors Association, Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines and civic groups have agreed to form the coalition during a recent meeting of the Provincial Peace and Order Council.

Brig. Gen. Pedrito Magsino, 901st Infantry Brigade commander, told those who attended the meeting that most of the extortion activities were reported in the towns of Camalig, Guinobatan, Oas, Ligao, Manito and Polangui in Albay.

Last year, he said, the NPA attacked vital communication equipment of private companies and government facilities, resulting in damages costing P68 million. Of the amount, P14 million in losses were reported in Albay, Sorsogon, and Masbate.

Magsino said the rebels burned transportation equipment, vital installations and communication facilities. He added that it was the local businessmen who suffered much from these forms of harassment.

Marcial Tuanqui Jr., ACCI chair, said they were very eager to coordinate with the PNP and the AFP since members of the chamber were the ones greatly affected by the NPA activities.

"Considering that Bicol is still regarded as the second most depressed region in the country after the ARMM (Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao), this kind of news is very frustrating and at the same alarming," he said.

"If this (extortion) continues, there would be only a few businessmen who will invest in this region if it is not safe anymore, or even none," he said.

Gov. Al Francis Bichara said that "if you invite foreign businessmen to invest in our province, they always ask for the real peace and order scenario."

Magsino said the NPA's "progressive tax" collection thrived because some local businessmen were afraid and refused to disclose such activities or coordinate with the military and the police.

"The more they give in, the more they will lose later on. If they continue to remain silent, then time will come when they cannot escape anymore being be regular contributors," he said.

Magsino assured the businessmen that soldiers could be deployed but only for a short period. *Gil Francis Arevalo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

# Communist rival groups clash; 2 die

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Two suspected members of the New People's Army were killed in an encounter between the communist rebel group and its rival faction, the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (RHB), along the Pampanga River in Macabebe town on Saturday night.

Reports reaching this police camp identified the fatalities as Rogelio Pelena, 26, and Rodrigo Magpayo, 25, both of Barangay Bambang in Bulacan, Bulacan. Their bodies were recovered in Barangay Taliptip in Bulacan town.

Supt. Arnold Gunnacao, Bulacan police intelligence officer, said Pelena and Magpayo were patrolling the Macabebe stretch of the Pampanga River in Barangay Consuelo, Macabebe, when RHB members saw them and engaged them in a gunfight.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, Pampanga police director, said Macabebe policemen on Sunday morning also engaged the NPA in a 10-minute firefight in the same area but reported no casualty on both sides.

An RHB source confirmed the Saturday clash but said at least eight NPA rebels aboard a motorized banca were killed. The source reported no casualty on the side of the RHB.

The claim could not be independently validated. NPA sources have yet to confirm the number of fatalities in the encounter.

Mendoza said the RHB, the armed group of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines, and the NPA, the armed wing of the 32-year-old Communist Party of the Philippines, were fighting over control of areas for the collection of "revolutionary taxes."

But sources from both groups have maintained that their conflict was mainly on ideology, and strategies and tactics in establishing a Marxist state.

The RHB was formed in 1997 after several CPP leaders bolted to form the MLPP.

The human rights group Karapatan-Central Luzon said armed men killed two brothers in Macabebe on Sunday noon.

It identified the fatalities as Ferdinand Manuyag, 25, and Pedro Manuyag Jr. 23, both of Barangay Consuelo, Macabebe.

Karapatan members, who conducted a fact-finding mission on Monday, claimed that the victims were shot and killed while they were sleeping in their hut. Their parents, Pedro Sr. and Emerenciana, had left the hut after they ate their lunch.

A Karapatan report said an RHB member, who it claimed was a military informer, and several soldiers and policemen went to the Manuyags' house and were looking for Pedro Sr., whom they accused of being an NPA member. *Carmela Reyes and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

# Hopes still up for missing mountaineer

**By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—Is a missing mountain climber being held against his will somewhere in the mountains of Antique?

After three months of searching in vain for her 22-year-old son, Marsha-Roa Gutierrez says she believes that he is still alive and being held by an armed group.

But she is at a loss over what group has taken him and its motives.

"For three months, we have been waiting to receive a letter containing a demand in exchange for his release. But so far, nothing," Gutierrez said in a telephone interview.

She said her family was still hoping for the best. "We are clinging to the Lord that He will surface Leovic."

Leovic disappeared in the Madia-as mountain ranges in Culasi town in Antique, 92 km north of the capital town of San Jose, on Feb. 16 during a mountain climbing trip with friends.

He disappeared three days after his group arrived at the Lipata port in Culasi.

According to his companions, they noticed that Leovic was missing while they were on their way down.

The group had split into two teams and reunited in Manigbuyo, a stopover, before proceeding to Barangay Flores, a regular jump-off point for climbers 10 km from the town proper.

One of the guides looked for him, thinking that he might have gone ahead while the rest proceeded to Flores.

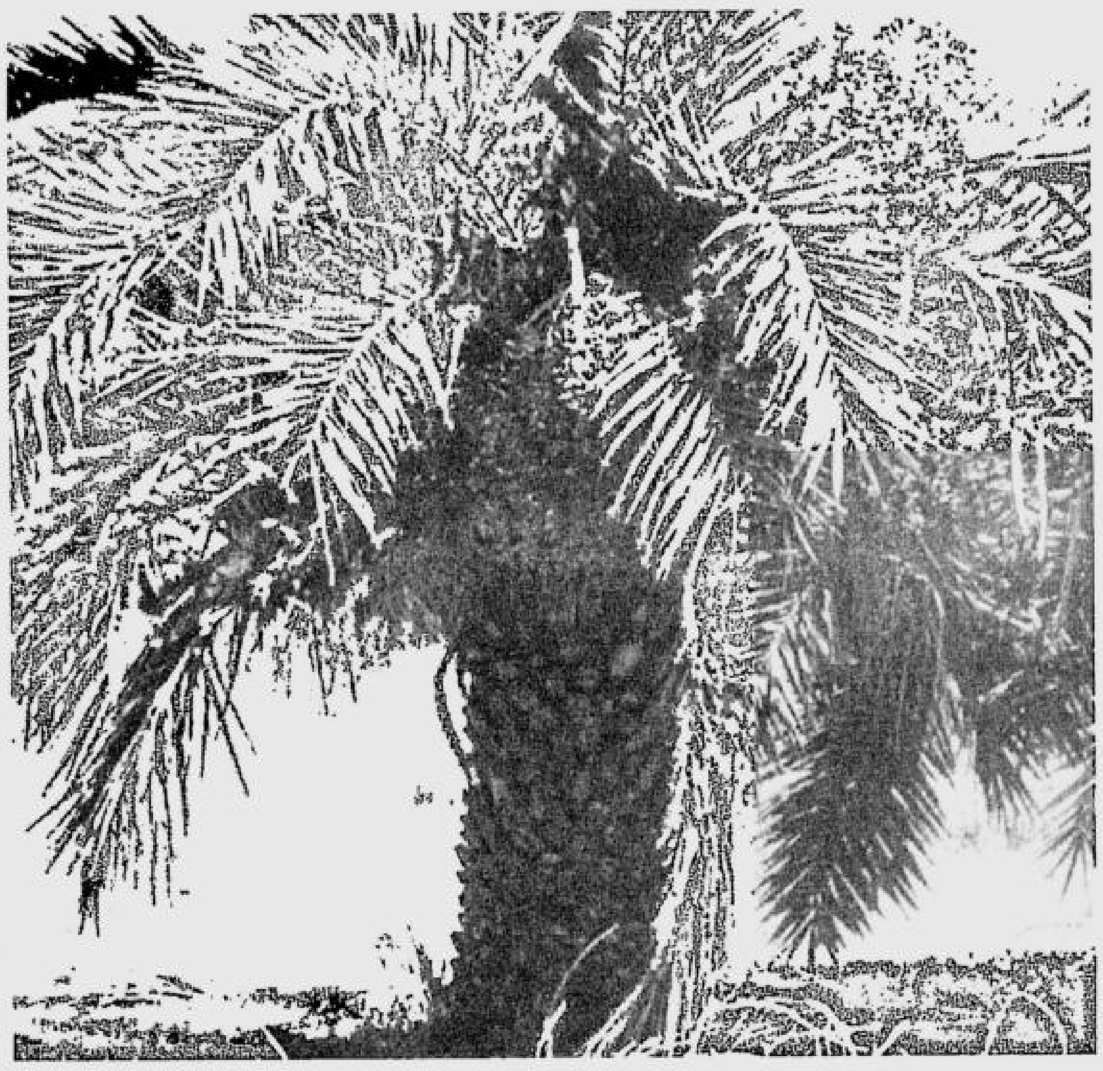
After failing to find him, the group continued their descent and reported the incident to municipal officials.

Leovic has not been found despite a massive search operation joined by hundreds of policemen, volunteers and members of mountain climbing groups all over the country.

The National Bureau of Investigation has stepped into the case but has not made any substantial progress in the investigation. "Zero *talaga*," said lawyer Carlos Saunar, NBI director for Western Visayas.

# *Heritage tree faces survivors' challenge*

**By Juliet Cataluña**
*PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



**THE PHILIPPINE** date palm, locally known as "voyavoy," is endemic to Batanes and is among the endangered plant species in the country.

BASCO, Batanes—Think of a tree that could survive super-typhoons, a prolonged dry season and occasional bush fires, and almost automatically you would think of the fabled baobab (*Adansonia digitata*) tree in the deserts of Central Africa.

But one does not have to look at the fringes of the African deserts. The Philippine date palm, locally called *voyavoy* and which is indigenous to Batanes, is a symbol of survival and best exemplifies the Ivatan's instinctive ability to survive in a harsh environment.

But the Philippine date palm's survival is being threatened after the species was classified as "endangered" in the 1997 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened plants.

The *voyavoy* grows as tall as 4 meters (13.12 feet). It has hard and rough trunk and crowned by prickly leaves. Its flowers are small and the fruits are yellow, turning dark purple to black when ripe.

Dr. Domingo Madulid, head of the National Museum's botany division, says the *voyavoy* is found only in Batanes although other studies show the species is also known to occur in parts of Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos).

Recent studies on the *voyavoy* have resulted in the production of color brochures and posters to create awareness to save it, Madulid says.

These were results of efforts of De La Salle University faculty researchers and the Biodiversity Information Center-Plants Unit of the National Museum. Their work was supported by the IUCN-Species Survival Commission (IUCN-SSC), Philippine Plant Specialists Group, Chicago Zoological Society, the provincial and local governments, Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad, and the Department of Science and Technology.

A small number of *voyavoy* exists in the country and they are found only in Batanes, says Dr. Maribel Agoo, chair of DLSU's biology department.

**AN IVATAN** grandmother from Sabtang Islang wears a hooded cape or "vakul," which is made from the young dried leaves of voyavoy.

PHOTOS BY TISHA TIMBANG

Reports said plant collectors from Metro Manila have tried to grow the *voyavoy* but failed.

The leaves are collected and fashioned by the Ivatan into a rain cape or *vakul* for women and vest or *kanayi* for men. The fronds are tied together and used as brooms.

Members of the DLSU and the National Museum team presented their study on the *voyavoy* to officials and residents here last week to encourage the Ivatan folks to help in the information and education campaign on the endangered tree species.

During a workshop, the team recommended continuous research and the sustainable use of the tree for its survival.

The participants prepared a resolution adopting the *voyavoy* as "flagship species" and drew up plans for its conservation, Madulid says.

# Laguna town mayor eludes arresting cops

LUMBAN, Laguna—Mayor Reynato Macalalag eluded arrest by policemen who stormed his house on Monday morning to serve a warrant for the murder of a barangay official here.

Macalalag was not at his house when the lawmen came and has reportedly been on vacation somewhere in Metro Manila since May 5.

The arrest warrant was issued on April 23 by the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 18 at the National Capital Judicial building.

The murder charge stemmed from the death of a village volunteer security, identified as a certain Quiatchon, of Lumban, in 1995.

Supt. Edgar Danao of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group based in Camp Crame led the arresting team, which was joined by members of the Western Police District and the local police, and journalist.

The supposed arrest was served at about 4 a.m., Monday at Macalalag residence. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

# Aeta livelihood projects need corporate support

**By Leo Celdran**
*Contributor*

*(Last of Two Parts)*

COMMENTARY

SIX months from now, Labay Ku will have its hands full of *gabi*. Thus, it is imperative for the Aeta federation-cum-cooperative composed of 10 Aeta communities, to begin searching for a regular market or bulk buyer for its agricultural produce. Only when ready buyers are identified will sustainable development be given assurance since the livelihood projects can now take on a permanent configuration.

In such situation, there now exists a justification for continuous extensive crop production because the undertaking is backed up by supply agreements with end-users.

Whether you are a small enterprise or a giant firm requiring a steady supply of *gabi* for whatever use and purpose, we appeal to your sense of corporate responsibility to lend a hand to the Aeta. You may contact Sisters Malou Santos or Marian Herrera of the Convent of the Holy Spirit at 721-7286, 721-7297 or 727-0324. Your exemplary act of helping the poor communities will not only be patriotic but also inspirational in uplifting people's lives.

Make no mistake about it though. *Gabi* is not the only thing the Aeta folks produce. Since they are an agricultural people, their natural strength lies in the soil of their vast, fertile land which can produce anything, from a whole gamut of root crops like sweet potato, peanuts and cassava, to high-value crops, like rice, coffee and vegetables.

The land is so fertile and productive that the size of their produce could be five or ten times larger than ordinary commercial farms without using harmful inorganic fertilizers and toxic pesticides. That is how blessed the Aeta people are, but since they do not possess economic power, that condition is left untapped, waiting one day for someone to uncork and unleash its benefits.

## Good business

Hence, it makes good business sense to harness the Aeta people to produce your agricultural requirements and, in the process, both you and the Aetas win. When institutionalized, mutual gain can indeed lead to more wonders.

To San Miguel Corp., this is the opportune time to tap them as in the past few months, you have been looking for joint-venture partners owning hundreds, even thousands, of hectares of available land to produce large quantities of products that your company regularly requires. It will definitely be a boon to your company as you live out your corporate credo of being socially responsible while profiting with honor.

To the Department of Agriculture, your national mandate of ensuring food security stands out as a natural ally and strategic fit to the Aeta people's quest for sustainable livelihood projects. Why not lend a hand to them and see for yourselves the impact of how your expertise in agricultural development can make a huge difference in improving their quality of life. You could be the unsung heroes of this noble crusade.

Now that you have learned about how the poor and marginalized Aeta people survive in a truly unpredictable, harsh and competitive world, it is about time we share our blessings and make a difference in their lives. If you agree with the crusade of liberating them and leading them to the promised land of empowerment and emancipation, it is time to heed the call to be up in arms, not to agitate for violence but to show solidarity and profess involvement toward collaborative and concerted effort.

## Force field

What is demanded is a force field of positive reinforcements from all sectors of society to escalate the war against indifference, ignorance, injustice and poverty. As day follows night, there can only be victors in this heightened war.

Thus, to nongovernment organizations, cause-oriented groups, civic and religious associations, private foundations and charities, forget not the Aeta people in promoting your agenda for social transformation. You are well equipped to give them a voice.

To national government officials, national government agencies, and local government agencies, consider the welfare of the Aeta in your livelihood and economic programs. Let them feel that they, too, are your valued constituents.

To government and private financial institutions, local and international banks, foreign aid agencies, multilateral donor institutions, fear not the risk of extending financial credit and assistance to fund the Aeta people's highly lucrative agricultural projects. Giving them the benefit of the doubt will truly be a confidence-building strategy in transforming them into bankable and financially responsible citizens.

To the private sector, the corporate world, the academe, and wealthy individuals, be an agent of change and make your participation resonate in this unpopular mission to build the Aeta communities as a sustainable, free and just human community.

To anyone who is presently searching for the meaning of life and dreams of making his own humble contribution to humanity, you many want to begin with the disadvantaged Aeta. From nothing, you may be able to turn them into something.

*THE AUTHOR is a graduating Master in Management student at the Asian Institute of Management. He chose the Convent of the Holy Spirit's Aeta Missions as his Leadership Walkabout Project, the final hurdle for completing the program. This is his way of making his own humble contribution to building communities, to uplifting people's lives. He can be contacted at mmlcc@mail.aim.edu.ph*

# *Erap gets new lawyer to stop Sandigan trial*

From page A1

ans Memorial Medical Center, tapped an Ateneo de Manila law professor, Alan F. Paguia, who entered his appearance at the anti-graft court yesterday.

Paguia filed a motion seeking the dismissal of the cases for "lack of jurisdiction," and asked that a hearing on his pleading be set on May 23.

Estrada, who affixed his signature to Paguia's motion to signify his approval, will attend that hearing, according to his aides who accompanied the lawyer to court.

State prosecutors and militant groups called yesterday's episode another delaying tactic by the Estrada camp. "Let us end this chapter ... of recycled arguments by the Estrada lawyers and cite them in contempt," asked the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya.

Claiming he would present arguments "not raised before," Paguia said he was out to show that the Supreme Court "violated Estrada's constitutional right to due process" and displayed "clear partiality" when it legitimized the Macapagal administration.

Paguia also asked the anti-graft court to relieve his client's four de officio counsels of their duties.

A member of the Ateneo Law Class '83, Paguio is currently a professorial lecturer at the Ateneo and the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. Listed in the Asean Directory of Legal Scholars, he has published a course book on law and several articles.

He entered the scene while the Estrada trial is in a lull. Prosecutors rested their case on April 9 and the defense panel was said to be preparing to file a demurrer to evidence.

## Paid ads

**LAWYER Allan Paguia presents his credentials to the Sandiganbayan as new counsel of ousted President Joseph Estrada.** JOAN BONDOC

Paguia's entry was foreshadowed by the publication on March of his 38-page booklet titled "Rule of Law or Rule of Force?"—a material circulated by Estrada supporters of late.

The booklet, parts of which appeared as paid ads in the INQUIRER and two other broadsheets last month, presents Paquia's analysis of the Supreme Court's March 2001 ruling that declared Estrada as having "resigned" from the presidency.

Paguia attached the book as part of his four-page motion yesterday. It insists that the Sandiganbayan cannot put Estrada to trial since he is still the "true President" of the republic.

The constitutional grounds for then Vice President Macapagal to succeed Estrada, he said, were not present when his client was ousted through a people power uprising in January 2001 amid charges that he received millions of pesos from gambling lords and pocketed tobacco taxes.

A sitting president can only be replaced if he died, suffered a permanent disability, tendered his resignation or was convicted in impeachment proceedings, according to Paguia.

Detained for the last two years now, Estrada himself would often recite this constitutional provision in media interviews.

Paguia also noted that Supreme Court "justices violated the law when they attended and participated in Edsa II which was obviously a partisan political activity," and when they proclaimed Macapagal the new President.

## Prejudged

Their being at the Edsa Shrine, the motion said, already "prejudged the controversy even before Estrada could file his petition before the High Court."

"If I were in their places, knowing the facts, I would resign," Paguia said of the justices in an interview.

Asked why he decided to take Estrada's case, he said: "I know that professionals like myself, when it comes to the law, have to tell the people what they have to know as only lawyers can do."

Told that his move would deny Estrada a chance to present his defense, Paguio countered: "Our thesis is that a sitting President can be prosecuted or investigated only in an impeachment proceeding."

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio curtly dismissed Paguia's motion as another delaying tactic by the Estrada camp.

Nevertheless, he said, "this is a welcome development. At least he (Estrada) is again hiring a departe counsel."

Noel Malaya, one of Estrada's court-appointed lawyers, who may have to step aside if Paguia is recognized by the court, said. "I can only feel relieved if we are to be dismissed, but we have to wait for the court order."

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# Hollywood Fil-Ams' aid enlisted for veterans bill

From page A1

day of her state visit.

The President said Gerry Adevoso, whom she named representative of the Philippine Veterans Administration to the United States, would find enthusiastic support from Hollywood stars of Filipino descent, including Lou Diamond Phillips, son of an American serviceman who was once assigned to Subic, and Dean Devlin, grandson of a veteran from Iloilo.

"He is tasked with coordinating lobby efforts for the veterans' legislation," Ms Macapagal said of Adevoso, son of famous guerilla leader Terry Adevoso.

The President said she met with Philips and Devlin in Hollywood in Los Angeles before leaving for Washington.

She said Devlin, producer of movie hits such as "Independence Day," "Godzilla" and "The Patriot," promised to produce a film on Filipino veterans that could star Rob Schneider and Tia Carrere.

Schneider, whose mother is from Baguio City, appeared in "The Waterboy," "Big Daddy" and "Deuce Bigalow." Carrere, whose father hails from Cebu, was in movies like "True Lies," "Wayne's World" and "Rising Sun." She also top bills AXN's series "Relic Hunter."

Phillips, whose mother Lucita is a Filipino, has already produced a documentary on the veterans and testified before the US Senate, according to the President. He appeared in "Young Guns," "La Bamba" and "Courage Under Fire."

Ms Macapagal said films like those dealing with Filipino war veterans would be shown in a filmfest to be held during a Filipino-American Week, which has yet to be set.

In a speech before some 700 members of the Filipino-American community in Washington, Ms Macapagal announced that the Bush administration had pledged $75 million in benefits for the Filipino World War II veterans.

"Let us therefore push the veterans' bill with the same tenacity in the US Congress. For my part, I will take it up again in my meeting with President Bush tomorrow," she said.

The President said she was confident Bush would support legislation extending full rate service-connected disability compensation, eligibility for burial at national cemeteries, burial benefits for new Philippine Scouts residing in the United States, full-rate dependency and indemnification for survivors of new scouts, veterans of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and recognized guerrillas who lawfully reside in the United States, and reauthorization for the regional veteran affairs office in Manila.

Ms Macapagal said the equity veterans bill almost passed in 2001 as it reached the Senate appropriations committee.

But she said time ran out because the congressional elections were held in 2001 and the Philippine government had to start all over again in lobbying for its passage.

She was referring to the passage of US Sen. Daniel Inouye's proposed Filipino Veterans Benefits Improvement Act.

The Senate bil was an offshoot of last year's negotiations among the Philippine government's joint executive-legislative delegation, the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans (ACFV) and congressional sponsors led by Inouye, former Rep. Benjamin Gilman (Republican, NY) and Rep. Bob Filner.

On Saturday, Ms Macapagal told some 3,500 Filipino-Americans, who joined her in a Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels in downtown Los Angeles that she would push for the passage of the bill.

*"Itutuloy natin ang ating paglaban* (Let's continue the fight)," the President said.

"We are proud of the contributions of the Filipino war veterans who gave so much so we can have our freedom," she said.

In an open letter, ACFV president Patrick Ganio, an 82-year-old veteran, last week called on Ms Macapagal to ask Bush to support Inouye's bill, saying that her visit to the White House would be "a historic opportunity to settle our Filipino WW II veteran claims once and for all."

While Filipino-Americans awaited the arrival of Ms Macapagal at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels, about 60 activists held a rally outside to protest the presence of American troops in the Philippines.

Protesters from Gabriela Network (GABNet)-USA and Bayan-Southern California carried placards and banners that said, "US Troops Out of the Philippines" and "Philippine Sovereignty Not For Sale."

"She (Ms Macapagal) has sold the Filipino people's dignity by allowing the return of US troops to the country," said Annalisa Enrile, GABNet-USA chair.

"This return nullified all the sacrifices of thousands and thousands of men and women of the Philippines to get the US military off their backs," she added.

Enrile also denounced what her group described as the government's lack of respect for human rights, citing the case of slain activists Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy.

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# Bush to GMA: Proud to call you friend

From page A1

**PRESIDENT** Macapagal waves to the crowd upon arrival at Fort McNair in Washington. Behind her is First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

ERNIE SARMIENTO

to discuss a new global environment and what we need to address the security and economic challenges of the global environment," the President said at a press conference on the eve of her meeting with Bush.

She said she would invite Bush to visit Manila when he attends the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Bangkok in October this year.

Leaders of some 700 members of the Filipino-American community, which hosted a dinner for Ms Macapagal, made much of the fact that her state visit was only the third in the Bush administration.

"We're proud of the fact that your leadership has been accepted by those in this room and by the Bush administration," said Irene Natividad, head of the Philippine-American Foundation. She was joined by Loida Nicolas-Lewis, president of the National Federation of Filipino-American Associations, in toasting the President.

"The President stands tall no matter what her height is and whoever is doing the measuring," Natividad said to the applause of the Filipino-Americans who came from all over the United States.

## Pomp and glitter

Ms Macapagal is getting America's version of the royal treatment—a state visit featuring a day full of pomp and glitter that Bush reserves for courting the most crucial of friends.

The visit is designed to maximize Ms Macapagal's exposure to the White House spotlight. From the moment she steps out of a limousine on the South Lawn at mid-morning Monday until the state dinner entertainment in late evening, the news media will be in tow.

In between, the schedule includes an Oval Office meeting, a news conference, an official greeting ahead of the black-tie dinner and a photo opportunity before the meal.

Accompanying the Philippine president is her husband, the First Gentleman. About 130 people, many of them Philippine officials, received dinner invitations.

At the state dinner, lamb is the main course on the menu. Susan Graham, an opera singer from Midland, Texas—the town where Bush spent part of his youth—is the scheduled entertainer.

Bush and Ms Macapagal have a few personal things in common. Both are 56. Arroyo is the daughter of a former president; Bush is the son of one. Both took office on the same day in 2001.

## Pageantry

Bush's recent predecessors cranked up the White House pageantry machine with regularity. Former President Bill Clinton was host to 27 state dinners during his eight years in office, and former President George Bush, 17 in four years.

Conferring the rare distinction on Ms Macapagal signaled the value Bush places on his relationship with the Philippines. It is payback for her loyal support in the fight against international terrorism.

Ms Macapagal was among the first world leaders to call Bush and express condolences after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. She and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore were the only two Southeast Asian leaders to support the US-led war in Iraq, and she expelled three Iraqi diplomats after Bush asked allies to do it. The Philippines is sending a 175-member humanitarian mission to postwar Iraq.

The state visit offers an opportunity to join another ally in a "victory lap" following the US-led military success in Iraq, said Catharin Dalpino, a specialist on US-Asian relations at the Brookings Institution.

"With the bombings in Riyadh and Morocco, we're going to see some charges that the Bush administration was not paying proper attention to the war on terrorism when it was focused on Iraq," Dalpino said. "This is a way for the Bush administration to signal that, yes, they are."

## More than memories

Ms Macapagal wants to take home more than memories.

**A WORLD** War II veteran salutes President Macapagal who looks the other way during the dinner hosted by the Filipino-American community in Washington. Beside the President is Philippine Ambassador to the US Albert del Rosario.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Singapore's Goh visited Washington last week and signed an agreement that would wipe out tariffs and other trade barriers on about $33 billion in annual trade, and give US banks and companies more access to one of Asia's main financial centers.

Now it's Ms Macapagal's turn.

She is seeking duty-free privileges for Philippine products, such as dried mangoes, pineapple juice and tuna. Ms Macapagal also wants to see Philippine businesses get reconstruction contracts in Iraq and is trying to lure US companies to invest in operations on the islands.

The bombings in Morocco and Saudi Arabia, as well as intelligence reports that suggest the possibility of terror attacks in Southeast Asia, add to the urgency of Ms Macapagal's request for more US military aid for the only former American colony.

"What she's looking for is an expansion in US military assistance in terms of equipment, training and advisers," said Patricia Paez, a spokesperson at the Philippine Embassy in Washington. "The US forces will not play any combat role, but they will help us in routing out the terrorists ourselves."

At a press conference, the President declined to say how much economic and military assistance she was expecting to reap from the Bush administration during her three-day official state visit which begins here today.

"I'm not here to suggest it's payback time," she said.

"We supported the war without sending a single soldier because it was the right thing to do. I am here as a partner in a revitalized and maturing alliance and together we must share our perspectives of the world today and see what, together and also separately, we can do in order to face the challenges of that world," she said. *With a report from AP*

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# Filipinos 'great blessing' to Catholic Church in US, Los Angeles bishop tells GMA

**By Juliet Labog-Javellana**

LOS ANGELES (Via PLDT)—Filipinos are a "great blessing" to the Catholic Church in the United States, according to the Archbishop of Los Angeles.

"They make our place a wonderful cathedral," Cardinal Roger Mahony of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels said Saturday. The cathedral, which is considered an architectural landmark, was completed in September last year.

Mahony told President Macapagal-Arroyo she must be very proud of the Filipinos who regularly pack the cathedral on Sundays and where more than 500 serve as volunteers.

"We have a very large faithful community and they are a great blessing to us," Mahony said in a brief speech before the Mass to welcome Ms Macapagal, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and her official delegation.

Mahony extended a "very warm welcome" to Ms Macapagal and said that she made history because she was the first head of state to ever visit the grand cross-shaped Cathedral.

"You're the first one to be recorded in our history books," Mahony said.

Ms Macapagal returned the affection, thanking Mahony for celebrating the Mass for her and the Filipino-American community on Saturday.

She also pointed to one important detail. "Thank you also for wearing a beautiful vest made of beautiful Philippine *piña* embroidery," she said, and the congregation applauded.

Ms Macapagal waved to the crowd before the Mass and received communion along with the First Gentleman.

The President said she felt at home in the cathedral.

"This large gathering of Filipinos and Filipino-Americans, including the more than 500 volunteers from this Cathedral alone, attests to the deep faith of the Filipino people wherever they are. We are an international people and we have a universal faith," she said.

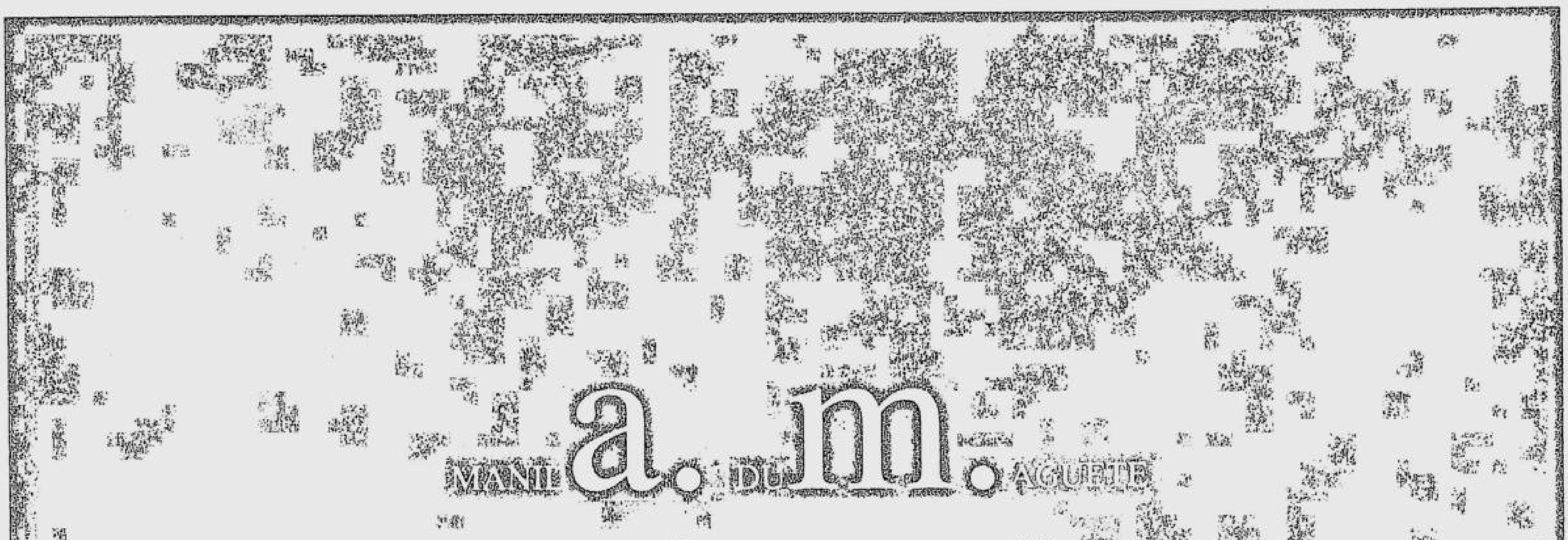
She sometimes spoke in Filipino. The Mass was said in English but the Filipino choir of Southern California sang Tagalog liturgical songs.

The President met briefly with Mahony before Mass. After the Mass, she joined the Filipino-Americans at a cocktail reception where the Gospel Philippine Missionary Choir of USA sang more songs.

Earlier, Philippine Consul General Marciano Paynor Jr. said more Filipino-Americans had wanted to hear Mass with the President than the new cathedral could accommodate.

Paynor noted that the consulate general had 3,500 free tickets to distribute to the Filipino community for the Mass at the 3,000-capacity cathedral.

"There were more people than there were tickets," Paynor said, adding that the members of the Filipino community wanted to show up out of an "honest and sincere desire to see the President."



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# More troops mobilized for war in South

From page A1

pality of Munai, a Moro Islamic Liberation Front camp he described as "the center of terrorist operations in Lanao del Norte."

He said rebel leader Yanyah Laksadatu and his fighters escaped and were now being pursued.

"We are anticipating they (the MILF) will step up attacks," AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya told reporters, saying the "selective aerial and artillery attacks" were directed mainly against MILF strongholds.

"It might take a few more days, possibly toward the end of the month, to finish one portion of the operation," he said.

Kyamko said at least 50 rebels were killed in Piagapo, Lanao del Norte, another 30 to 35 were killed in Munai, and 17 more were killed in Sirawai, Zamboanga del Norte, bringing the total MILF death toll as claimed by the AFP to at least 97.

Kyamko also warned the public to be careful because Abu Sayyaf kidnappers may strike again after their last two hostages escaped over the weekend.

## More troops

Maj. Gen. Cristolito Balaoing, chief of the 4th Infantry Division headquartered in Cagayan de Oro City, said more than 3,000 soldiers, including the 66th Infantry Battalion based in Negros, have been sent to augment his troops.

A brigade of Marine soldiers also arrived in Maguindanao on Sunday, for deployment in the Buliok complex. Their arrival brings the total number of brigades under the operational control of the 6th Infantry Division, under Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga, to eight.

The 2nd Marine Brigade's artillery pieces and armored vehicles arrived in Pikit during a heavy downpour. The Marines had been pulled out from Tawi-Tawi and Sulu to reinforce other Marine units in Buliok. The 7th Marine Battalion team secures the former house of MILF chair Salamat Hashim in Barangay Cudal, Pagalungan in Maguindanao.

The 2nd Marines join the 6th ID's three organic Army brigades, the 301st Infantry Brigade from the 3rd Infantry Division in Visayas, the Army engineering Brigade and two Marine Brigades.

In remarks that coincided with the President's state visit to the United States, Abaya aired an appeal for more US assistance.

"There are certain capabilities that we would like the Armed Forces of the Philippines to have in order to meet its mandated tasks, and the priority right now is how to end these internal security problems that we have," Abaya told a news conference.

"We've been asking from the United States some form of assistance in building our capability."

He said the Philippines needed helicopters and transport aircraft, improved communications capability and patrol craft, but gave no figures.

Abaya said a key priority would be to beef up naval patrols in the sea borders with Malaysia and Indonesia to intercept arms smuggling as well as foreign militants going to MILF bases in Mindanao and nearby areas.

## Angry Senate

The bombing raids in Mindanao angered several senators.

In an extemporaneous privileged speech, Pimentel, who is from Mindanao, said he was opposed to the military action, noting that it was "possibly predetermined" and its timing was delayed to "coincide" with the President's state visit to the United States.

"(The bombing was done) to impress US President George Bush that the Philippines is an ally in the fight against terrorism," he charged. He said nongovernment organizations have told him that 318,000 people in Zamboanga del Norte have already fled their homes because of the military operations.

GOVERNMENT troopers prepare for renewed hostilities against the MILF at Camp Awang, Cotabato City Monday. EDWIN BACASMAS

Sen. Gregorio Honasan questioned why the government was spending so much "on an enemy not pinpointed."

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda said the Senate should ask the executive branch to explain its objective for the military operations and how it was spending for it.

Later, Legarda told reporters that the ongoing military action was a "subterfuge for all-out war."

"It's the wrong tack again and again," she said.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson told reporters that good intelligence work was the "best way to pinpoint targets."

Lacson said there was no way that the military could assure that civilians would not be affected in the operations.

Administration Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said such a "low-intensity situation" in Mindanao did not require the use of a "hammer."

## Still war

In Zamboanga City, Fr. Angel Calvo took exception to Kyamko's claim that the bombardment did not amount to a war.

"Bombing, shelling, punitive actions? It's still (the) violent approach and it is still war," Calvo said.

In various interviews, both the military and the MILF vowed that civilians would be spared from their attacks and counterattacks.

Senga said his 6th ID had planned the campaign in such a way that they would only hit specific targets.

"We guarantee that civilians will not be caught in the crossfire," he said.

The MILF also gave a similar promise. "We have specific instructions to our combatants to spare the civilians even if there were military targets in their midst," Ebrahim Murad, MILF military chief, told the INQUIRER.

Senga said no major offensive had yet taken place.

"What transpired so far were pocket wars in Pikit (in North Cotabato) and Matanog, Maguindanao," he said.

But Murad said any offensive launched by the military would always be reciprocated with similar attacks.

Civilians, however, are not killed only by bombs and bullets.

Fr. Bert Layson, parish priest of Pikit town in North Cotabato, warned that more children would die in various evacuation centers in North Cotabato and Maguindanao if the operations continued.

Even before the new declaration of war, around 6,000 individuals or 3,000 families have been staying in evacuations centers in Pikit.

Layson said the civilian death toll in the evacuation centers in his parish alone reached 52 as of yesterday. He said most of the victims were children who died of various diseases including diarrhea and measles.

"With the deteriorating situation, it is expected that more civilians will die," he said.

"If the government has a war plan, they have to have an evacuation plan also . . . but it's something that should not only be in the papers. There should be assistance for them," he said.

The offensives in Lanao del Norte have also displaced some 3,200 families, according to Gregorio Magsayo, assistant regional director of the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Northern Mindanao

## Prior notice?

Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, chief of the 1st Infantry Division, said residents would be informed prior to an attack, "so that they will not be hit in the crossfire."

But Basilan's Grand Mufti Ustadz Abdullah Hamja doubted this plan, saying civilians would be taken by surprise, as in the past.

He said the government even failed to wait for the MILF's formal response to Malacañang's June 1 deadline to comply with certain conditions.

In Malacañang, Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao declined to answer questions about whether the ongoing operations vindicated President Joseph Estrada's "all-out war" policy against the MILF.

"That's for historical analysis," Tiglao said in a media briefing at the Palace war room. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Charlie C. Señase, Jeffrey M. Tupas, Julie S. Alipala, Grace Cantal-Albasin and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with reports from Christine Avendaño, Carlito Pablo; AP, AFP*

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# Metro cops placed on full alert against terrorists

From page A1

we don't want to be complacent. That's the reason why the chief PNP has given (the) directive to improve our police visibility," De Leon, director for police community relations, told reporters.

He added: "We are preparing, but it's better that we are ready. There are no specific reports that Manila will be in danger."

Ebdane issued instructions to Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco of the National Capital Region Police Office to deploy more policemen to vital installations and "areas of convergence" in the metropolis, according to De Leon.

"In Metro Manila, we are also again closely monitoring the security of vital installations, and places of convergence," he said. "We're beefing up police beat patrols, and there will be regular inspections of deployment personnel."

De Leon said it would be up to the police directors in five districts to decide whether to set up checkpoints in their areas of jurisdiction. "Checkpoints are left to the discretion of the district directors," he said.

Police in Luzon and the Visayas have also been alerted to "review security plans" in key economic points and vital installations, according to him.

## Verifying reports

Meanwhile, the military yesterday said it was verifying reports that foreign terrorists are already in Metro Manila.

In a talk with foreign correspondents, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya said that the report was being verified by the PNP, the lead agency in the investigation.

"Our intelligence units are (also) pursuing these leads but we haven't gotten any report yet," Abaya said in a chance interview after his talk with members of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

Abaya said the PNP report on the presence of Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaida members in Metro Manila was general in nature.

"But as to the specifics, I haven't got (it)," he said.

## Intel network

In the same interview, transcripts of which were made available to defense reporters, Abaya said a year-old report claimed that foreigners were training MILF members.

"But like I said, these are unverified," Abaya said.

The National Capital Region Police Office said it would activate its intelligence network to flush out alleged JI members who are reportedly operating in Metro Manila.

NCRPO chief Deputy Director Gen. Reynaldo Velasco also told the INQUIRER the police have not received any reports of operatives of the JI operating in Metro Manila.

"We will look for them (JI members) including the MILF. We will activate our network, which includes barangay officials, and we will monitor any and all reports to see if they are true. We will work on it," Velasco said.

Velasco assured residents of Metro Manila that they were safe from any more terror attacks. "We have some provisions for our security measures."

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# Stop fighting, bishops . . .

From page A1

Macapagal-Arroyo and MILF chair Salamat Hashim, to whom the CBCP had sent an "open letter" urging a ceasefire and calling for negotiations.

On May 9, Quevedo said, the MILF responded with a letter signed by Mohammad Nur, chief of staff of the "Office of the MILF Chairman."

In the letter, the MILF said it "mourns over the deaths of innocent civilians" as a result of military offensives against them and that it condemns terrorism.

Quevedo summarized the MILF letter, saying the separatist group "wants hostilities to end since in armed confrontation there are no victors, only victims, especially when the conflict is due to centuries-old cultural, political and economic issues."

"The MILF states that (a) ceasefire is still possible and that the peace process can still continue. It is committed to a 'sincere and principled talk'," he added.

In the letter, the MILF also defended the raids on Maigo and Siocon towns as "attacks on military targets."

"Clearly, the MILF condemns terrorism and the deaths of innocent civilians. While it considers civilian deaths in the Maigo and Siocon attacks as 'collateral damage,' it claims they are not intended," Quevedo said.

## Refugee problem?

Meanwhile, fearing that the trickle of refugees from Mindanao might become a flood, Metro Manila Muslims yesterday urged the President to resume peace talks with the MILF.

"We're asking President (Macapagal) Arroyo to continue the peace talks and not resort to these bombings. Our relatives are getting caught in the crossfire," said Datu Amerol-Gulam Ambiong, chair of the Metro Manila Muslim Peace and Order Coordinating Council.

"Fighting will not solve the problem in Mindanao. Look at what happened during the time of [Ferdinand] Marcos. We had so much bloodshed. It was only during [the term of Fidel] Ramos, when we had peace, that (Muslim leader Nur) Misuari returned to the fold of the law," said Ambiong, who is a leader of the Muslim community in Quiapo.

"The MILF might be wiped out but there will be others to take their place. The only way to solve the problem in Mindanao is through the negotiation table. This is what the President's Muslim brothers and sisters are asking," he added.

Ambiong said he was not an MILF supporter and, like other Muslim leaders in the capital, was even helping the police make sure that Muslim communities in Metro Manila are not used as launching areas for bombings.

Ambiong said 50 to 100 Muslim refugees from Mindanao were arriving weekly in Manila due to the conflict.

"Each time a ship (from the South) docks at the pier, there are always refugees," he said. Ambiong said there were currently some 5,100 refugees in Quiapo.

In Zamboanga City, Fr. Angel Calvo said the Coalition of Mindanao Peace Advocates had already passed a resolution, calling for an immediate ceasefire.

"Bombing and shelling will not achieve the real vision. The challenge here is to continue talking peace. The problem in Mindanao will never be solved with bombings, punitive actions and militarization," Calvo said.

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# *Finland perils RP bid to be declared SARS-free*

From page A1

The elderly man turned out to be negative for the SARS virus.

The Philippines has protested to the WHO its inclusion on the list of countries where SARS has spread. Foreign businessmen and tourists have been advised by their governments to avoid travel to the Philippines. Filipino workers have also been denied entry into several countries.

## Reclassification

"The Philippines is now ready for a reclassification," Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said in a statement from Geneva where he is attending the WHO's annual assembly.

Dayrit pointed out that there had been no new SARS infection the past 20 days, the condition set by the WHO for a country to be removed from its SARS blacklist. The latest WHO travel advisory covers the Philippines, China, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The health department last week declared two SARS cases involving two Filipinos who had contracted the virus in Taiwan and Singapore.

"These are considered imported cases ... So technically these cannot affect our efforts at reclassification," Dayrit said.

The health department has confirmed 12 SARS cases, including two deaths. All 10 patients, including two Filipinos who contracted the virus in Taiwan and Singapore, have recovered.

The only two SARS fatalities involved a Filipino nurse who contracted the virus in Toronto, Canada, then infected her father when she returned to the Philippines last month.

Dr. Maria Consorcia Quizon, chief of the National Epidemiology Center, said the WHO blacklist had considerably damaged the country's international image.

A poignant case was a reported ban on the entry of 21 mentally challenged Filipinos to Ireland, where they were to compete in the Special Olympics, an international athletic competition held every four years *(See story on Page A4)*.

"This is their chance to rise above their circumstance in life, to be able to feel that they're OK, to feel that they can compete and wear the name of their country on their jackets," said Carmel Almendrala, who was supposed to head the delegation to next month's Dublin games.

"Suddenly they can't go," she said.

Almendrala said her group had appealed to the organizers to reconsider the ban since the Philippines was only mildly hit by SARS and has no new cases.

## Bahrain

Bahrain, however, seems impressed by the anti-SARS measures that the Philippines has adopted, including tight checks in ports of entry, a warning of arrest to travelers who falsify data on health forms, and the setting up of a P1-billion emergency fund.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said Bahrain lifted restrictions on the entry of Filipino workers and tourists during the weekend. The Gulf state hosts about 30,000 documented overseas Filipino workers.

Bahrain used to require all visitors or workers from the Philippines to first spend at least 10 days in a SARS-free country before they are allowed entry into Bahrain.

Bahrain has lifted the ban on all tourists and workers coming from the Philippines, the Department of Labor and Employment said yesterday.

"I hope that when the World Health Organization removes us from the list of SARS-affected countries, those who are banning us would also take us off their list," Sto. Tomas told reporters.

Taiwan, Turkey, Kuwait, Libya and Cyprus have also restricted the entry of OFWs or foreigners coming from the Philippines. They must first present a SARS-free certificate and undergo mandatory quarantine.

Health and labor officials are keeping their fingers crossed that no new SARS case would emerge the next few days, frustrating the country's bid to be removed from the WHO blacklist as what happened to Singapore.

The surprise emergence of a new SARS case just as Singapore was preparing to declare the viral epidemic under control dealt a painful psychological and economic blow to the city-state.

Singaporeans were expecting to wake up Monday to news that the island was finally off the WHO blacklist of SARS-hit areas, but their hopes evaporated after a new infection was disclosed Sunday night. Singapore officials said the latest SARS patient might have caught the bug in Malaysia.

The 20-day, infection-free window needed to get off the list was to have lapsed at midnight (1600 GMT) Sunday.

So far, 28 out of 206 SARS cases in Singapore have died, making the city-state one of the worst-hit areas considering its small population of four million and its heavy dependence on tourism and services. Globally, more than 600 have died out of nearly 8,000 cases, mostly in China and Hong Kong. *Reports from Armand Nocum, Blanche Rivera, AFP and AP*

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# De Villa new man in South

From page A1

casualties.

Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao said De Villa would "see to it that all the policies are right and the campaign in Mindanao, by which I mean not only the military but social and political (aspects), would be given emphasis."

"Secretary De Villa would be the man, the President's alter ego, in terms of the overall development in Mindanao," he added.

He said Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for Mindanao whom Ms Macapagal called her "Mindanao czar" only recently, "would be actually the man on the ground."

## 'Teka, teka'

De Villa, who also ran for the presidency in 1998, was nicknamed "Teka, teka" (literally, Wait, wait) because of the botched siege of Camp Cawa-Cawa in Zamboanga City on Jan. 6, 1989.

The camp had been surrounded by land and air forces personally commanded by De Villa, then AFP chief of staff, in an attempt to subdue renegade policeman Rizal Alih. Alih was holding several hostages inside, Brig. Gen. Eduardo Batalla and Col. Romeo Abendan.

In the end, the two military officials and 10 others died, while Alih escaped. He even sent the military a picture of himself weeks later.

De Villa was denounced for his alleged hesitation in ordering the attack before Alih could kill his hostages.

De Villa was Ms Macapagal's first executive secretary.

But after his bypass operation in May 2001, he decided not to resume his post.

Last year, he was given a low-key role as "adviser on strategic concerns."

Last week, De Villa was given the job of weighing the pros and cons of declaring the MILF a terrorist group because of its recent attacks on civilians in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, and in Maigo, Lanao del Norte.

De Villa yesterday said the June 1 deadline that the President had given the MILF to renounce terrorism still stood.

He said the President's order for aerial attacks on "embedded terrorist cells" in Mindanao, which observers say is a reference to the MILF, was in line with her antiterrorism policy.

Just two days into the campaign, De Villa said the order "is proving to be successful because there is popular support."

# Woman not sorry she killed stepdaughter

**By Christian Esguerra**

"SHE is singing happy tunes."

This was how a police officer yesterday described the woman who killed the 14-year-old daughter of her live-in partner in a gripping hostage drama in Parañaque City last week.

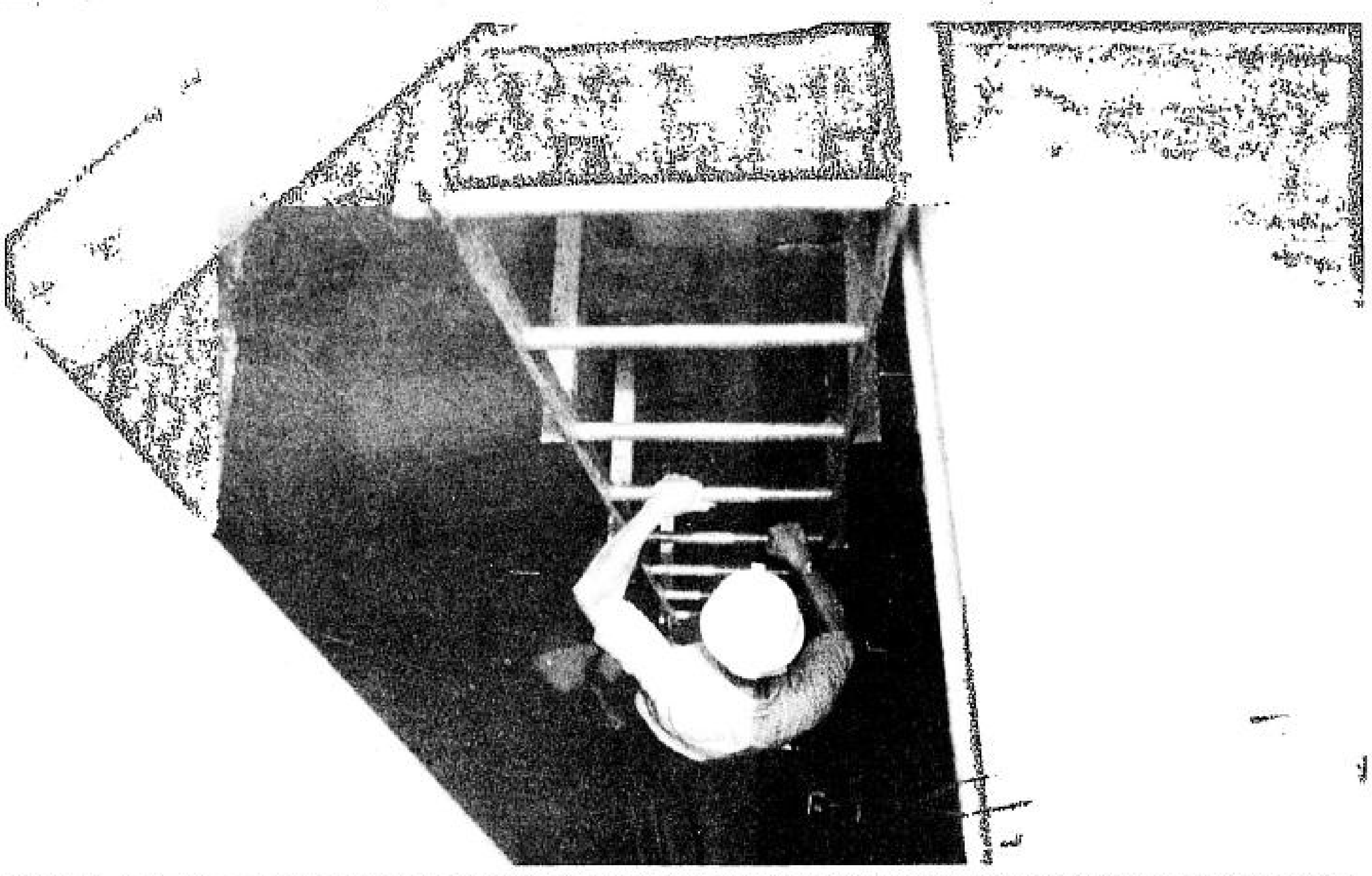
An unrepentant Jemalyn Malintag, 20, was singing and grinning in jail, hours after she shot dead Rosalie Villafuerte, said city police chief Ronald Estilles.

"She never apologized for what she did," Estilles told the INQUIRER.

During interrogation, Malintag claimed she had killed Rosalie to get back at her live-in partner Valentino Malintag, 50, for allegedly beating her up, Estilles said.

But probers believe she only made up the story to justify the cold-blooded killing which was witnessed by the victim's father and 9-year-old brother. Police are set to file murder charges against Malintag before the city prosecutor's office.

Last Thursday, Malintag took a gun from a neighbor and held Rosalie hostage after the father confronted her for forcing the girl to work at a billiards center nearby, police said.



**ENGR. Mario Rodriguez of the water supply department goes down the chamber of the San Juan reservoir to show reporters how deep it is. Manila Water officials are struggling to extricate the body of 19-year-old Randy Diaz, who fell in the chamber on Saturday.** JOAN BONDOC

# MWCI: One body not enough to pollute Metro water supply

From page A20

MWCI media relations manager Ranulfo Habaluyas said Diaz's body could be lodged only about 50 meters away from the ventilation chamber he fell into.

Lacsamana said MWCI had increased pressure from the Balara plant "to push out whatever foreign object (is stuck in the pipeline) into the unused reservoir in San Juan."

The mainline where Diaz fell into has been isolated and is no longer connected to the main distribution line, according to Lacsamana.

The MWCI has three mainlines.

Lacsamana also assured customers that the water coming from MWCI pipelines is still potable.

"The water is still safe because of the isolation of the mainline affected," Lacsamana said. "We have also increased chlorine dosage and we are conducting intensive testing of the water together with the Department of Health."

"I drank water and brushed my teeth this morning and there was no problem," he said.

Calayan said the water firm and DOH were conducting intensive monitoring of water quality.

He said residual chlorine samples were being taken every hour in 17 points in San Juan and Quezon City, adding that bacteriological tests were being conducted every four hours.

"Although we do not expect a possible contamination, we are doing this to ensure that the quality of water does not decline," Calayan said.

He said results of initial tests showed that their water has remained odorless and clear, and has a sufficient amount of residual chlorine.

The MWCI will also insert a plug on the 1525-mm mainline where Diaz's body had been swept away. The process has resulted in wasting about 96 million liters of water, but it would stop water pressure and allow divers to search for the body.

Lacsamana explained that if they cannot recover Diaz's body in the next 48 hours, they would have to totally decommission the main line affected.

The line starts in Project 2 in Cubao and goes all the way to the Manila area.

The decommission of the line would affect areas such as the Roxas district, Barangays Pinagkaisahan, Damayang-Lagi, Marianas and E. Rodriguez.

Hospitals and schools along E. Rodriguez Avenue will be affected.

Lacsamana said he had already advised these establishments to start storing water.

Quezon City police have been conducting the search and recovery operations for Diaz's body, but have so far failed to find it.

In Mandaluyong City, Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. yesterday directed the local health department office to regularly monitor the quality of the city's water supply. He also ordered the local fire department to be prepared for the possibility that city's water supply would be cut off.

San Juan municipal government acting spokesperson Elvira Flores yesterday said the municipality is ready for any eventuality. She said the municipal government is set to use the numerous deep wells strategically built in town as an alternative water source.

## METROBRIEFS

### Mayor wanted for murder

MANILA regional trial court Judge Romulo Lopez has issued arrest warrants for Mayor Reynanto Macalalag of Lumban, Laguna, and nine other suspects for the murder of a political opponent in 1995. Western Police District officers secured the warrants from Judge Lopez of RTC branch 18 on Friday. Police failed to find the mayor in his town yesterday. The other suspects are councilor Rodolfo Magano, barangay chair Bella Rana-Aquino, Oscar Abadier, Edwin Macawili, Hector Samonte, Florentino Garcia, Robert Baiza, Salvador Ortencio, and the alleged gunman, Sonny Cacalda. They were tagged in the killing of Alberto Quiatzon on Nov. 20, 1995 in Barangay Sto. Niño, Lumban. Before Quiatzon died two days later, he was able to relate what happened and name the mayor and the others as the culprits. *Jerome Aning*

### Caloocan cop foils robbery

THE CALOOCAN City government has commended PO2 Alberto Dimazana for bravery when he foiled a robbery in the city last Saturday. Mayor Rey Malonzo awarded a plaque of appreciation to Dimazana for stopping Elmer Buico from robbing merchandiser Rosalinda del Rosario, 26, of Diliman, Quezon City. Police said Del Rosario was standing at the corner of Natividad Street and Calle Cuatro, Caloocan, at around 8:30 p.m. on May 17, when Buico, 25, of San Valley, Parañaque, held up the victim. PO2 Dimazana , who was on patrol, spotted the robbery, chased the suspect, and gunned him down. *Tina Santos*

### Taxi driver slain in Manresa

TAXI driver Lucino Abisula learned a fatal lesson on Saturday: Don't fight off robbers. Abisula, 47, of Balut, Tondo in Manila, was stabbed to death when he resisted robbers in Barangay Manresa in Quezon City just after midnight. Residents in the area were able to corner one of the suspects, a Norial Abiado, 22, and turned him over to the police. The other suspect, a Tony Borbe, managed to escape, said SPO4 Mario Villareal. Abiado is now in jail, facing robbery with homicide charges. *Luige del Puerto*

### 2 killed in Manila accidents

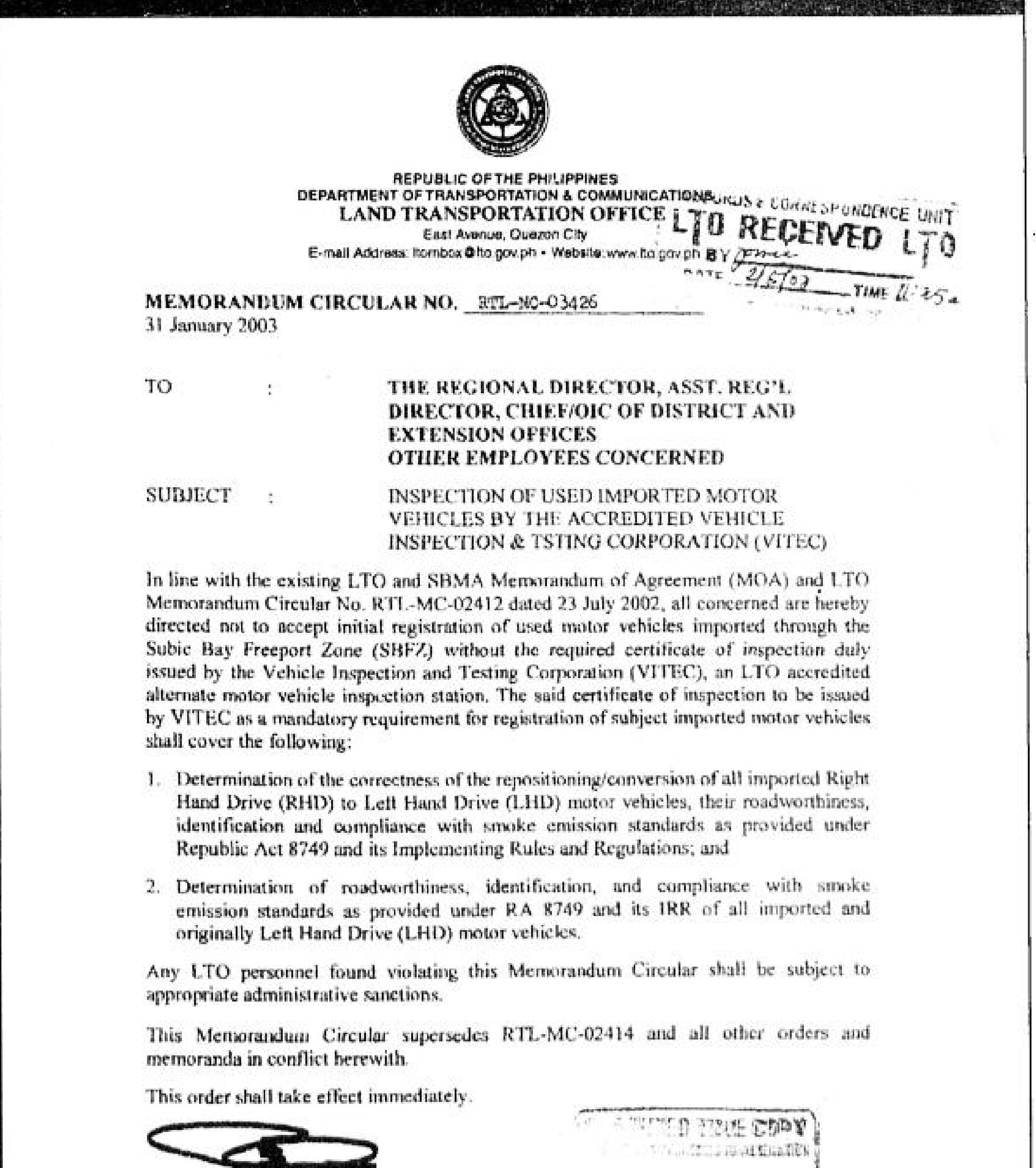
TWO persons, including a woman in her 60s, were killed in separate accidents in Manila. Noel Bernales, 30, of Tondo, Manila, was crossing Bonifacio Drive at the Port Area in Manila when a jeepney hit him at around 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, said PO2 Rey Vallente. The jeepney driver, who plied the Quiapo-Pier route, did not stop and drove away right after the incident. Witness Frederico Platas, however, was able to write down the jeepney's control number—823, PO3 Rodrigo Didio said. On Sunday morning, an unidentified woman, who was described to be in her 60s and was wearing a green duster, was crossing Tayuman Street near the corner of Juan Luna when she was hit by a truck driven by Adolfo Asoy, 28, of C-3 Road, Caloocan City, Vallente said. Asoy later surrendered to the police. *Philip Tubeza*

ATTENTION

Buyers of Used Imported Motor Vehicles

Starting 23 July 2002, all used imported motor vehicles from the Subic Bay Freeport Zone (SBFZ) are required to secure certificates of inspection from the duly-accredited alternate motor vehicle inspection station within the freeport zone.

Failure to comply constitutes a violation of existing laws, rules and regulations, and may mean the cancellation and revocation of the registration of the vehicles.



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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. RTL-MC-03426
31 January 2003

TO : THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR, ASST. REG'L DIRECTOR, CHIEF/OIC OF DISTRICT AND EXTENSION OFFICES OTHER EMPLOYEES CONCERNED

SUBJECT : INSPECTION OF USED IMPORTED MOTOR VEHICLES BY THE ACCREDITED VEHICLE INSPECTION & TSTING CORPORATION (VITEC)

In line with the existing LTO and SBMA Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and LTO Memorandum Circular No. RTL-MC-02412 dated 23 July 2002, all concerned are hereby directed not to accept initial registration of used motor vehicles imported through the Subic Bay Freeport Zone (SBFZ) without the required certificate of inspection duly issued by the Vehicle Inspection and Testing Corporation (VITEC), an LTO accredited alternate motor vehicle inspection station. The said certificate of inspection to be issued by VITEC as a mandatory requirement for registration of subject imported motor vehicles shall cover the following:

1. Determination of the correctness of the repositioning/conversion of all imported Right Hand Drive (RHD) to Left Hand Drive (LHD) motor vehicles, their roadworthiness, identification and compliance with smoke emission standards as provided under Republic Act 8749 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations; and
2. Determination of roadworthiness, identification, and compliance with smoke emission standards as provided under RA 8749 and its IRR of all imported and originally Left Hand Drive (LHD) motor vehicles.

Any LTO personnel found violating this Memorandum Circular shall be subject to appropriate administrative sanctions.

This Memorandum Circular supersedes RTL-MC-02414 and all other orders and memoranda in conflict herewith.

This order shall take effect immediately.

ROBERTO T. LASTIMOSO
Assistant Secretary

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LTO

## NBI closes in on fugitive ex-governor

**By Philip Tubeza**

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents are closing in on former Quezon Gov. Eduardo Rodriguez and his wife Imelda after getting information about their whereabouts, an NBI official said yesterday.

"We are now verifying the tips that we got about their location. They're still in the Philippines," said Ricardo Diaz, NBI-Interpol unit chief.

He said NBI agents are looking for the couple in Metro Manila and Southern Tagalog, particularly in Lucena, Quezon, after the couple disappeared from their Makati residence.

Diaz said the couple cannot leave the country because they surrendered their passports to the Manila Regional Trial Court hearing their extradition case.

"They also have no visas. So unless they have other travel papers, I don't think they can leave the country," Diaz said.

Rodriguez and his wife failed to surrender for the third time at the NBI headquarters in Manila on Friday.

## Cleanup of Pasig schools ordered

**By Nelson Flores**

PASIG City Mayor Soledad Eusebio yesterday ordered the cleanup of all public schools in the city to prevent the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

Eusebio issued the order shortly after she created the Task Force SARS that would be responsible for the cleanup.

She also asked local barangay officials and her constituents to help by creating local health emergency response teams in their respective jurisdictions.

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JOAN BONDOC

**SMALL VOICES**
Children hold up posters containing a message to the Bureau of Internal Revenue during a rally staged by Akbayan on Monday in front of the tax agency's main office in Quezon City. The rallyists were protesting what they claimed as the "rampant and shameless corruption in the BIR."

## Erring drivers to lose license after 3 offenses

**By Leila Salaverria**

HABITUAL traffic violators, even if they pay the fine, might lose their driver's license as the Metro Manila Development Authority intensifies its drive against abusive and erring motorists.

As part of the crackdown against traffic violators, the MMDA will recommend to the Land Transportation Office the revocation of the license of drivers who have committed three violations in three months.

The MMDA is currently processing 333 licenses of drivers who are now facing suspension of their license. Most of these violators are public utility vehicle drivers and some of them have as many as six violations in three months.

"We'll now do the suspension of licenses regularly," MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said in his weekly press conference yesterday.

As far as appeal goes, the motorist should have done it when he was apprehended for a violation and not when his license is about to be suspended, Fernando said.

He added that if a motorist is caught driving with a suspended license, his license would be revoked. If the motorist is caught driving even with a revoked license, he would face a six-month imprisonment, Fernando said.

Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said that there are also dangerous and intentional offenses that merit an immediate revocation of a driver's license, like drag racing.

The MMDA has been able to keep track of how many motorists commit an offense, and how often they commit the offense.

## Petron bewails closure of bulk plant in Navotas

PETRON Corp. yesterday claimed that the "abrupt and unexpected" closure of its bulk plant inside the Navotas Fish Port Complex last Friday by the town government did not provide it due process under the law.

The plant was padlocked after it had failed to pay back taxes amounting to over P10.2 million.

Petron Corp. public affairs manager Virginia Ruivivar in a statement said the municipal government did not give Petron the mandated 15 days to appeal the decision before shutting down the plant.

Ruivivar also claimed that Petron has been faithfully paying its taxes and obligations to Navotas since they opened the bulk plant in 1979.

The bulk plant serves the fuel needs of fishing vessels operating locally and internationally.

*Tina Santos*

## PNR workers to go on strike

**By Abigail Ho**
**and Joyce Mejillano,**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

EMPLOYEES of the Philippine National Railways from its station in Tayuman, Manila to as far south as Legazpi City in Albay, are going on strike starting today to protest alleged management irregularities.

Lito Santos, Bicol district head of the PNR Employees Union, told the INQUIRER that the strike would take effect at 12:01 a.m. today and will last until PNR officials are ready to answer their demands.

Barring "drastic" measures on the part of the disgruntled workers, PNR officials yesterday assured the public that train operations would go on schedule, despite the threat of strike.

According to PNR assistant general manager Rafael Mosura, the railway system's operations manager has assured those present in the PNR management meeting yesterday that there would be train drivers willing to operate the trains even if the strike pushed through.

"That was the assurance that we were given during our meeting," Mosura said in a telephone interview yesterday. "(The operations manager) said that there are some drivers who are not sympathetic with the strikers."

"We're hoping that nothing drastic happens," Mosura added. "The Civil Service Commission will again talk to the employees (on Tuesday) to see if something can be done to prevent a strike from actually taking place."

In a May 3 letter to Malacañang, Jose Antonio Laurena, secretary general of Bagong Kapisanan ng mga Manggagawa sa PNR, listed down the workers' complaints against PNR General Manager Jose Ma. Sarasola II.

Among the complaints cited are the P900-million non-remitted GSIS premiums deducted from employees' salaries resulting in the suspension of employees' privileges and retirement payments, non-remittance of PhilHealth contributions, non-remittance of income taxes to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, delay in the payment of salaries and non-payment of cash gifts, salary differential and overtime.

Mosura said that the problems were inherited from the past administration. In fact, he added, the present management has already taken steps to solve the matter.

"Management also wants the best for the employees, but the problem is budget," Mosura said.

Union employees also complained of the alleged corrupt practices of the present general manager and his colleagues—ranging from illegal procurement practices resulting in revenue loss amounting to P126 million in recorded transactions.

But Mosura dismissed the allegations as untrue.

## 'To Death Row if he's guilty'

From page A20

cused of plotting the murder of former government informant Baron Cervantes in Las Piñas in 2001.

Maganto said his brother ran a small canteen in Norzagaray town and was into buying and selling used cars. Rodolfo has four children.

"Sometimes, I gave him capital for his business," Maganto said. "But I haven't been in contact with him for a long time. The last thing I heard about him was that he was confined (in hospital) because of a liver problem."

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# METRO

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*Editor* **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

# MWCI: One body won't pollute water supply

**By Agnes Donato, Alcuin Papa and Nelson Forte Flores**

THE FEAR of possible contamination of the water supply from the Manila Water Co. Inc. was yesterday downplayed by officials of the water firm even if it has yet to recover the body of Randy Diaz, 19, who fell into an MWCI aqueduct in Quezon City last Saturday.

"We are dealing with a very big volume of water here," said MWCI general manager for quality control and regulation Jun Calayan. "Frankly, one body is negligible."

Diaz's body was stuck in one of the MWCI pipelines and has yet to be recovered.

But water supply in a large part of Quezon City might be cut off if Diaz's body would still not be found.

MWCI spokesperson Joel Lacsamana said in a television interview that water service interruption would be for at least three days to enable divers from the Philippine Coast Guard to retrieve the body.

MWCI/ A18

SAN Juan reservoir where the body of Randy Diaz (inset) is expected to surface.

JOAN BONDOC

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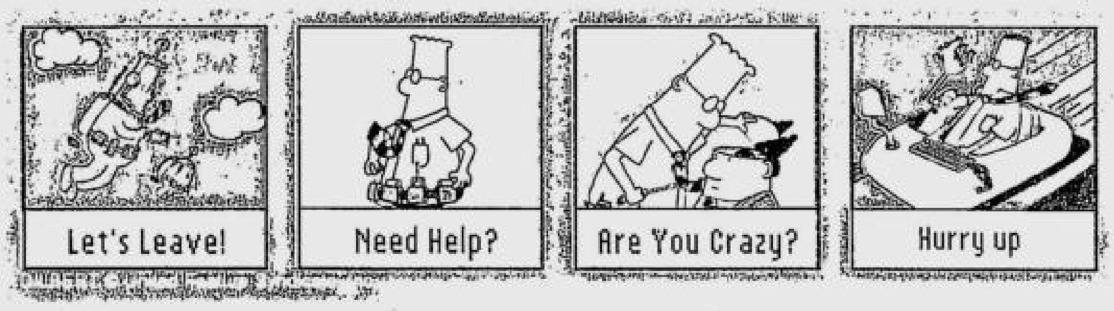
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# Maganto's brod held for drugs

THE YOUNGER brother of Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto was arrested by police during an anti-drugs operation inside a hospital in Sta. Maria, Bulacan, on Sunday.

Senior Supt. Felizardo Serapio, Bulacan police director, said Rodolfo Maganto, 53, was arrested inside Room 202 of the St. Mary's Hospital.

His three female companions identified as Graciana Araos, 29; Lita Grifaldio, 42 and Emelita Araos, 52, were also arrested. The three are suspected drug dealers.

About 55 grams of shabu with an estimated street value of P90,000 were seized from the suspects, said Supt. Enrico Salapong, Bulacan police chief.

Maganto had been confined at the hospital for two days after he complained of stomach pains. But Salapong said the confinement was a cover-up for the delivery of shabu to the three women.

Maganto and his companions were yesterday charged with violation of the anti-illegal drugs law before the provincial prosecutor's office in Malolos City.

Informed about his brother's arrest, Superintendent Maganto said that his brother is proven guilty, he would recommend him to be placed in the row of candidates for lethal injection *(See separate report below)*.

Serapio described Maganto as "very notorious" in the illegal drugs trade.

He said the older Maganto had called him to ask about the condition of his brother.

"He just checked on his brother," Serapio told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday. "He made no unfair intervention on behalf of his brother."

Citing police intelligence reports, Serapio said the younger Maganto had long been in the list of suspected drug traders.

He said street-level peddling of shabu is rampant in this town.

Policemen recently arrested here a Taiwanese for possession of two kilograms of shabu.

Serapio said this town is an entry point to Bocaue, Marilao and Meycauayan towns where the shabu trade has reached alarming proportions. *Carmela Reyes and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

# 'To death row if he's guilty'

**By Christian Esguerra**

SEND him to death row.

This was Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto's reaction to his younger brother Rodolfo's arrest for alleged drug dealing in Bulacan.

In a telephone interview with the INQUIRER yesterday, the older Maganto praised Bulacan police chief Supt. Enrico Salapong and his men for arresting his brother, Rodolfo, 53, whom he described as the "black sheep" in their family.

"I want my brother's case to be an example, especially to other families who have a relative involved in illegal drug trade and other illegal activities," the police general said.

Maganto said once his brother is proven guilty, he "will recommend him to be placed (among) candidates for lethal injection."

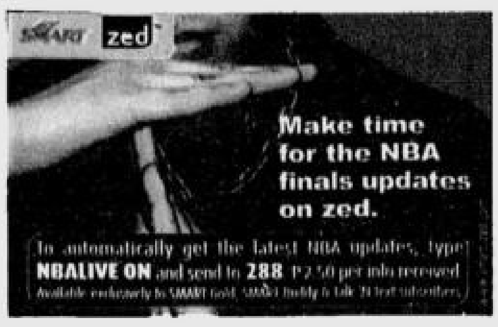
"I have long been (giving him advice) to stop his illegal activities. I even ordered that he be locked up in jail several times, but he is stubborn. I cannot force my brother to stop if he does not want to. As the eldest child, I now act as the head of the family because our parents are both dead. However, I cannot watch over my brother all the time," Maganto said in Filipino.

But he warned his critics against using his brother's arrest to hit at him.

"He has nothing to do with me," he said.

Maganto heads the high-profile team tasked to hunt down Supt. Rafael Cardeño and Santiago "Sonny" Camacho who were ac-

TO DEATH/ A19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*Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

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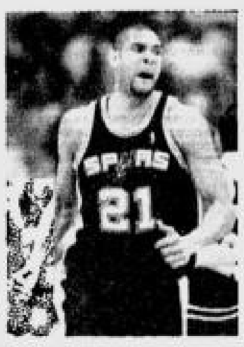
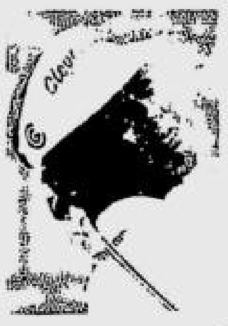
## WHAT'S INSIDE

- Kidd's jumper lifts Nets past Pistons /A22



- Spurs all set to face Mavs in West /A22



- Singh rules Nelson, but quits Colonial /A24
- Bata vs Django /A24
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# Pray for Lanao Palaro

**By Marc Anthony Reyes**

PRAY for play.

This could well be the new theme of the shelved Palarong Pambansa in Lanao del Norte after the military rained bombs on rebel lairs in the province and other parts of Mindanao.

Youth volunteers, Christians and Muslims alike, who pledged their services for the weeklong event, have already been tapped to offer prayers and petition for peace in the region.

Multi-sectoral prayer vigils are also being planned right at the Mindanao Civic Center, which has been built at the cost of P500 million to stage the national games.

PSC chair Eric Buhain yesterday said they continue to monitor the events unfolding between government troops and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front with deep concern.

The military on Sunday said the death toll in the bombing of "embedded terrorist cells" in Mindanao rose to 80 MILF rebels after President Arroyo ordered selective attacks.

Lanao del Norte officials, led by Imelda Quibranza-Dimaporo, said they were keeping their fingers crossed that the situation would improve soon.

President Arroyo declared last week that this year's Palaro staging would stay in the province but didn't state a specific date for its staging.

She said she was just waiting for the military to give the thumbs-up sign to start the Games at the spanking new Mindanao Civic Center.

Sources in the province said that, although things have been normal in Tubod, site of the Games, and its nearby towns during the past three weeks, there were still skirmishes in the mountains.

The situation could however deteriorate following the bombing by the military of several MILF lairs, which had forced the evacuation of at least 30,000 civilians in Lanao alone.

## *Postpone the Games—AFP*

**THE MILITARY wants the Palarong Pambansa postponed because of the ongoing offensive against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.**

**"We are recommending to the organizers of the Palarong Pambansa to push through with the games three weeks from now," 'Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, chief of the Armed Forces' public information office, said.**

**"We're just waiting for developments on our operations," he added.**

**The Palarong Pambansa was originally set May 4-11 in Lanao del Norte but was posponed indefinitely after the MILF launched several offensives days before the launch.**

**The MILF offensives were largely seen as retaliatory attacks after the fall of Buliok complex in Central Mindanao on February.**

**On Saturday, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo announced a new offensive against the MILF fueling fears that the rebel group might launch more attacks.**

***Martin P. Marfil***

## *No phone, no cash for Jimwell Torion*

**By Dennis U. Eroa**

TORION

NO cellphone, and no cash either.

But two weeks at the rehab center without them hardly mattered for Jimwell Torion. In fact the fiery Red Bull guard explained he's not complaining during a chance meeting with the INQUIRER at the SM Megamall Saturday.

"I must pay for the wrong I've done," said Torion, who is undergoing rehabilitation at the Life International Management rehab center and counseling at the Makati Medical Center.

"At the start it was difficult. I cried a lot because I wasn't used to this kind of situation. But my faith in the Sto. Niño helped me realize that this is for my own good," added Torion, who is under indefinite suspension by the PBA after testing positive for shabu.

Torion, who used to earn P240,000 a month, lives on a P350 daily meal allowance. He sleeps in a double-decker and gets to see his family only on certain days.

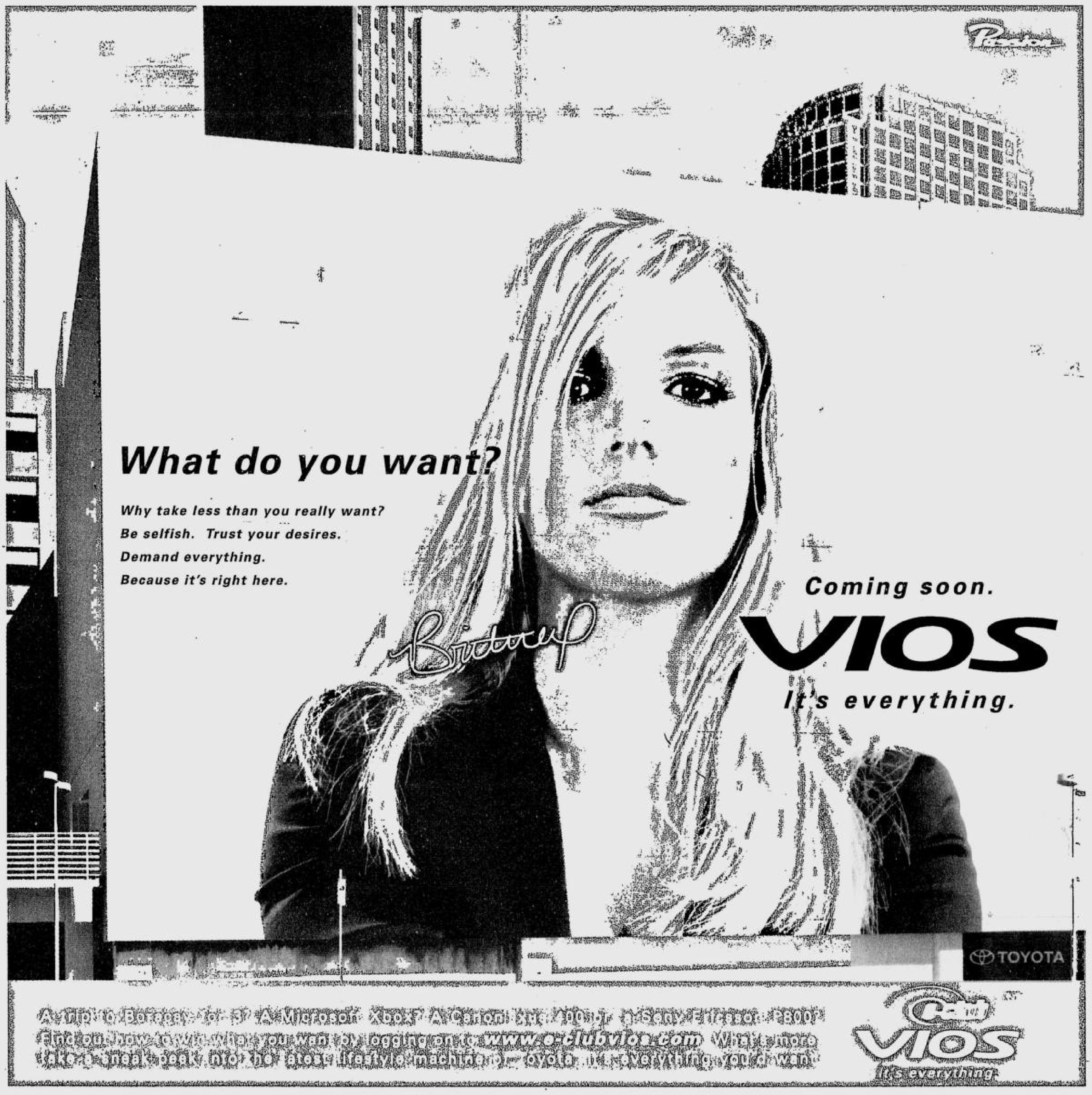
On the few occasions he is allowed to go out, Torion always has Dexter, a Life employee, who monitors Jimwell's progress, as companion.

In fact, Torion and Dexter were on the way to Makati Med for another round of counseling for the Red Bull ace when the INQUIRER spotted them.

Torion said he's grateful for the opportunity to reform and come back through the efforts of Life, PBA commissioner Noli Eala and the Red Bull management.

Tony Chua, Red Bull manager, said Torion voluntarily entered Life. Coach Yeng Guiao also expressed optimism that his starting pointguard would rejoin the team after the ongoing All-Filipino Cup.

NO PHONE/ A23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## NBA EAST FINALS

# Kidd jumper gives Nets Game 1 win

**AUBURN HILLS, Michigan—Jason Kidd could not buy a bucket until it counted most.**

Kidd, who missed all but five of his first 18 shots, nailed a go-ahead fadeaway jumper over two defenders with 1.4 seconds left as the New Jersey Nets edged the Detroit Pistons 76-74 in Game 1 of the National Basketball Association's Eastern Conference finals.

"I hadn't made one in awhile so it was nice to get one at the right time," said Kidd.

New Jersey led 74-67 after Kidd sank a jumper with 3:05 left before Detroit stormed back to tie the game on a pair of free throws by Chauncey Billups with 22 seconds left.

Following a timeout, Kidd stood well outside the top of the arc and milked the clock before dribbling toward the right side.

After passing Billups, Kidd dribbled toward the baseline and launched a high-arcing jumper over center Mehmet Okur.

The ball circled the rim before dropping through the net with 1.4 seconds to play.

"I like to have the ball in my hands when it counts," said Kidd. "But if there was someone open I would have passed to them. This is going to be a long series."

The Pistons called a pair of timeouts around Tayshaun Prince's inability to inbound. Following the second timeout, the first-year forward launched a lob to the right side of the rim, where Okur outjumped Richard Jefferson and tipped the ball with his right hand.

Okur missed the initial tip but gathered the rebound and two-handed a second shot off the backboard.

But the ball hit the left side of the rim and bounced away, allowing the Nets to celebrate.

### Playoff games

Kenyon Martin contributed 16 points and nine rebounds and Kidd 15, nine and seven assists for the Nets, who have won seven straight playoff games, including four in a row on the road.

Richard Hamilton had 24 points to pace Detroit, which had won 16 of its last 17 home games over New Jersey and six in a row at The Palace in the postseason since losing game one of its first-round series with Orlando.

"Great players make great shots," Hamilton said of Kidd's jumper.

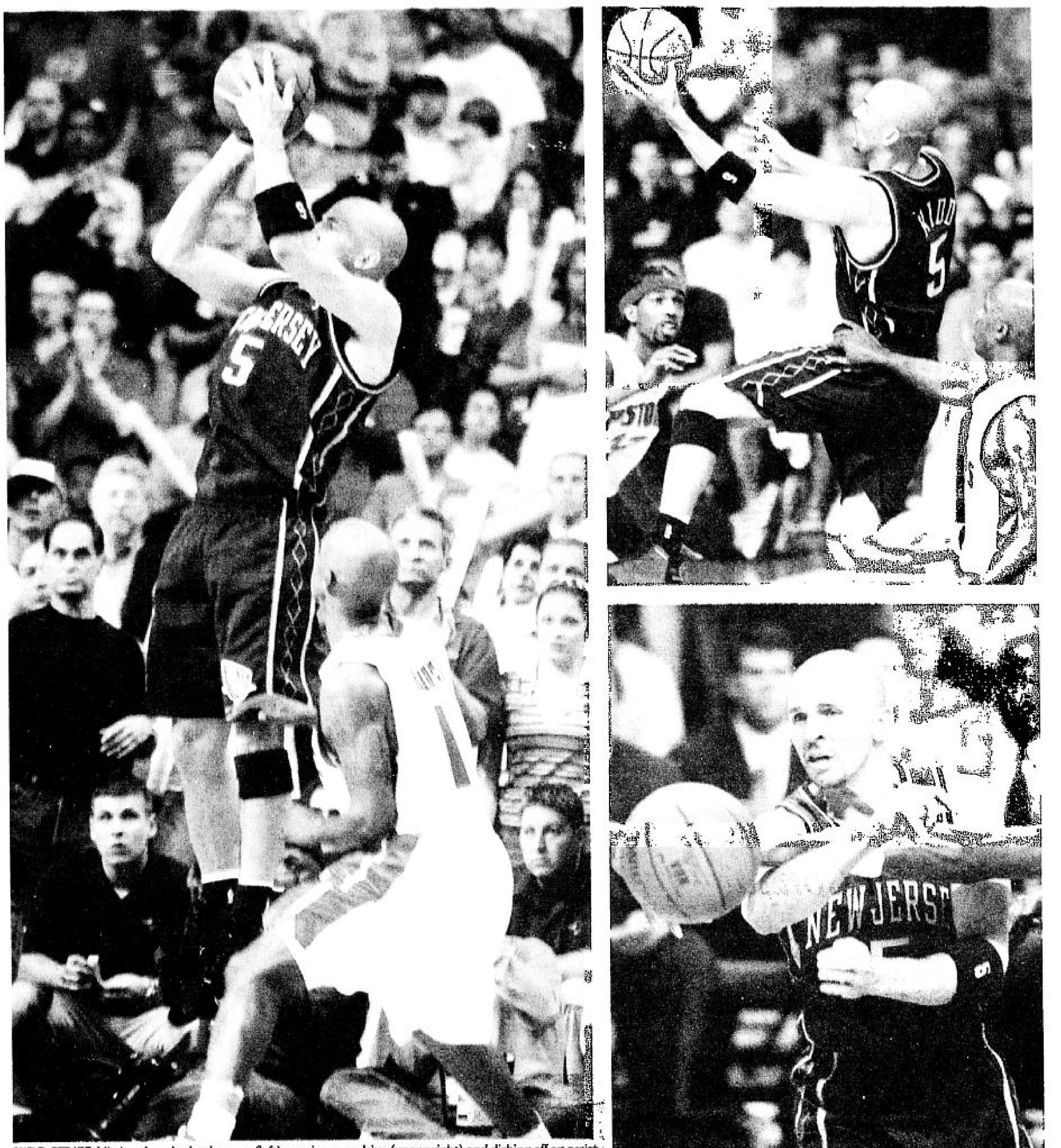
In a game that featured several lengthy field-goal droughts by both teams, New Jersey shot 40 percent (31-of-78) and Detroit 35 percent (25-of-71).

"We know this series is not going to be a series where there is a lot of up-and-down, a lot of dunks, a lot of fast breaks, a lot of alley-oops," Nets coach Byron Scott said.

New Jersey, which had a five-day layoff after sweeping Boston in the conference semifinals, jumped to an 18-6 lead on a follow basket by Jefferson with 2:44 to play in the first quarter.

Okur entered and scored eight points to help the Pistons pull within 22-16 entering the second period.

The Nets led by 43-36 at the break but came up cold in the third, allowing the Pistons to take a 63-53 lead on a layup by Ben Wallace with 26 seconds to play in the period. *AFP*



KIDD STUFF: Hitting the winning jumper (left), scoring on a drive (upper right) and dishing off an assist.
REUTER PHOTOS

---

SOLAR Sports will telecast Game One of the San Antonio Spurs-Dallas Mavericks NBA Western Conference Finals live on both Channel 29 (Skycable and Homecable) and IBC-13 today (Tuesday, May 20) at 9:30 a.m., with a replay at 8 p.m.

### AT A GLANCE

NBA PLAYOFFS 2003

**CONFERENCE FINALS**

**Eastern Conference**

**(1) Detroit vs. (2) New Jersey**

Pistons 0, Nets 1
Game 1: New Jersey 76, Detroit 74
Game 2 at Detroit (May 21, 8 a.m.)
Game 3 at New Jersey (May 23, 8:30 a.m.)
Game 4 at New Jersey (May 25, TBD)
*Game 5 at Detroit (May 27, 8 a.m.)
*Game 6 at New Jersey (May 29, 8 a.m.)
*Game 7 at Detroit (May 31, 8 a.m.)

**Western Conference**

**(1) San Antonio vs (3) Dallas**

Spurs 0, Mavericks 0
Game 1 at San Antonio (May 20, 9:30 a.m.)
Game 2 at San Antonio (May 22, 9:30 a.m.)
Game 3 at Dallas (May 24, 9:30 a.m.)
Game 4 at Dallas (May 26, 8:30 a.m.)
*Game 5 at San Antonio (May 28, 9:30 a.m.)
*Game 6 at Dallas (May 30,9:30 a.m.)
*Game 7 at San Antonio (June 1,8:30 a.m.)

* If necessary
TBD (To Be Determined)

## TEXAS SHOOTOUT

# After dispatching Lakers, Spurs now ready for Dallas Mavericks

SAN ANTONIO—The San Antonio Spurs insist they've moved past their emotional victory over the three-time NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers.

The Spurs celebrated their 4-2 series win over the Lakers, gaining a bit of revenge over the team that eliminated them from the playoffs the last two seasons.

Now, the Spurs are ready to move on, playing the Dallas Mavericks for the Western Conference title.

"It doesn't matter about the Lakers. We've beaten them and that's that," Bruce Bowen said. "We're trying to get a championship ring, and in order to get that, you have to continue advancing."

The Spurs host Game 1 of the West finals on Monday (Tuesday in Manila).

Veteran center David Robinson said the series against the Lakers hardened the Spurs.

"They were the champions three years in a row. They were very dominant; they had two of the best players in basketball," Robinson said. "Getting through the Lakers was a big hump for us, so now we still have some work to do, but we're in a good spot."

DIRK NOWITZKI

TIM DUNCAN

Robinson, a member of the Spurs' 1999 championship team, believes his team is focused on winning the title.

"Now you're right there, you can taste it. It's right in the air, and so guys are hungry," he said. "We're going to play well, I don't doubt that at all. We're going to make a team play really hard to beat us."

Against Dallas, the Spurs' know what the expect.

"They're really aggressive on running, so it's going to be a whole different thing and we've got to be ready for that," rookie Manu Ginobili said.

"We've got to know that there's not going to be a whole lot of set offense (to defend), like taking Shaq out of the paint or Kobe out of the ball. It's going to be a whole different thing."

Coach Gregg Popovich believes his team will carry momentum into the conference finals, despite a lengthy layoff.

"Each game is an individual statement," he said. "But I believe if you're playing well, it does carry over." *AP*

### SPORTS TV

**Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat**

**MOTOR SPORTS:** F1 Austrian Grand Prix; 8:30 a.m. (r); Star Sports - Take a look back at the speed demons as they overtake and outmaneuver each other in Austria for the chance to shower in champagne.

**BASKETBALL:** Mavs vs Spurs, Game 1; 9:30 a.m.; Solar Sports and IBC 13 (r-8 p.m., Solar Sports) - San Antonio and Dallas slug it out to prove who's the best in Texas.

**TENNIS:** Hamburg Masters Highlights; 11 p.m.; Star Sports - The best moments in last week's clay court tournament in Germany are featured in this show.

**BILLIARDS:** Rack 'Em Up 2; 8 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.; ESPN - Django Bustamante takes on Steven Davis and Alex Lely in this billiards extravaganza.

**GOLF:** PGA Eurotour Highlights; 10 p.m.; Star Sports (r) - Relive all the glory and agony as the PGA Tour crosses over the Atlantic.

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TUWING MARTES
Match #2
7:00 pm
IBC Ch. 13

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Dodong ANDAM versus Snooky VILLANUEVA
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**STANDINGS - Elimination Round**

| | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| Nikoy Lining | 1 | 0 |
| Dennis Orcullo | 0 | 1 |
| Dodong Andam | X | X |
| Snooky Villanueva | X | X |
| Lee Vann Corteza | X | X |
| Bebeng Gallego | X | X |
| Marlon Manalo | X | X |
| Warren Kiamco | X | X |

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By Marc Anthony Reyes

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| TIA MARIA'S | TIA MARIA'S | TIA MARIA'S |
| JUPITER ☎ 890.4735 | O 2 7<br>VERSE 2 | NO ENTRANCE FEE |
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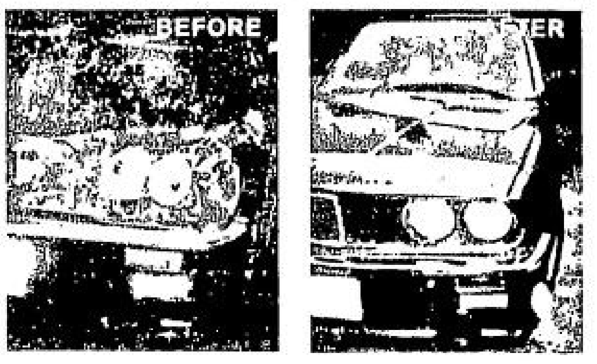
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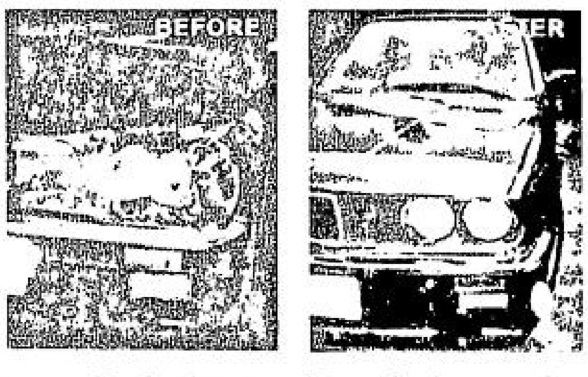

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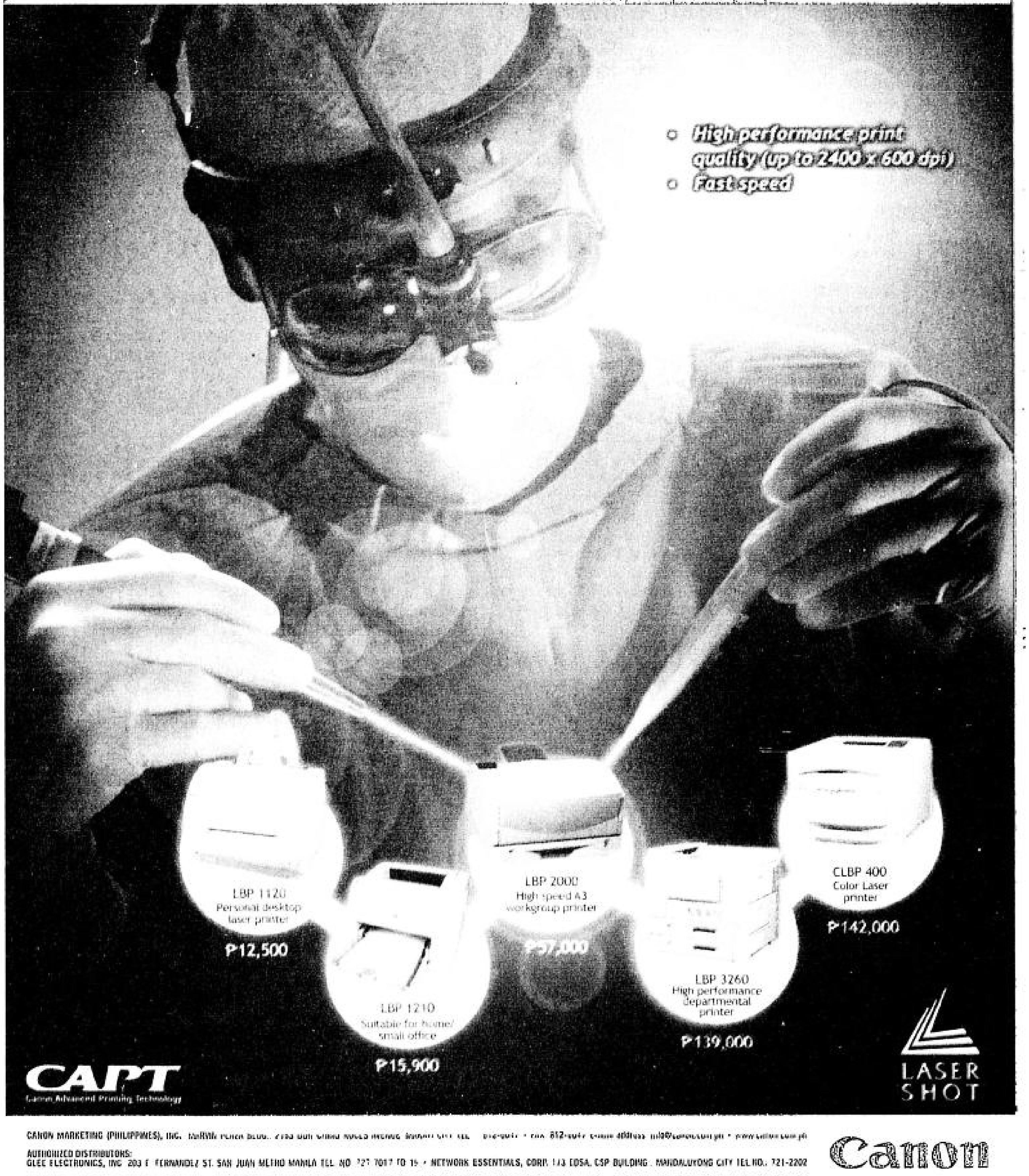
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# Singh tops Nelson, quits Colonial

SINGH

**IRVING, Texas—Vijay Singh made sure there won't be any awkward meetings with Annika Sorenstam at the Colonial.**

He won't be there.

After wrapping up a contentious week with a victory Sunday in the Byron Nelson Championship, Singh withdrew from the Fort Worth event that he said the LPGA Tour star has no business playing.

A woman was behind his decision, but Singh insisted it had nothing to do with Sorenstam, who will be the first female player in 58 years to compete in a PGA Tour event.

"I told my wife last week if I won last week, I would take this week off," Singh said moments after winning the Colonial at 15-under 265, two strokes ahead of Nick Price. "So since I won this week, I'm going to take next week off."

Singh had made no public references to such a possibility before that. And he had plenty of time with the media, from trying to clarify his previous comments about Sorenstam on Tuesday to topping the leaderboard after the second and third rounds.

"It has nothing to do with the controversy. I've played in four straight tournaments, and I need a break," he said. "It just came at the right time, I guess."

The only scenario for Singh missing the Colonial before then had been when he said he wouldn't play if paired with Sorenstam. He also had said he hoped she missed the cut.

Singh's comments to The Associated Press the previous Sunday about Sorenstam came after he finished second in North Carolina. He backed off a bit Tuesday, saying he was sorry if his comments came across as a personal attack. He also said that he hoped she missed the cut if he did, "because I don't want to have a woman beat me."

At the same time, he reiterated his objection to Sorenstam getting one of eight sponsor's exemptions into the Colonial, an invitational with a limited field. *AP*

## SPORTSWATCH

### Women's taekwondo tilt Sunday

PAST and present taekwando stars will see action on Sunday (May 25) when the Philippine Taekwondo Association (PTA) stages the 9th All-Women's championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. PTA president Robert N. Aventajado said the event stresses the important role women play in Philippine sports today. Competition in the tourney supported by Milo and the Philippine Sports Commission will be conducted in three categories–senior women (by age and weight), junior women (age and weight) and grade-school girls (age and height). According to PTA vice president Sung Chon Hong, around 700 lady jins from PTA affiliates and branches all over Metro Manila and the provinces including the military are expected to vie for honors. Sports aficionados are invited to watch the event starting at 9 a.m.

### Gap closing in on Williamses–Clijsters

CLIJSTERS

ROME—World number two Kim Clijsters has insisted the chasing pack are bridging the gap on the Williams sisters, who have dominated women's tennis for the past three years. "I think it's great to see that there are a few other girls out there who are capable of beating them," said Clijsters after winning the Rome Masters title here with her 3-6, 7-6 (7-3), 6-0 victory Sunday over French fourth seed Amelie Mauresmo, conqueror of Serena Williams in the semi-finals. "In the beginning, when they (Serena and Venus) started playing finals against each other, I think a lot of people were getting bored. Now I think it's great for women's tennis to see a few players that can compete against them." The 19-year-old Belgian second seed said she was not driven by the prospect of taking the world number one spot from Serena. *AFP*

### Sy spearheads tennis advance

AKIO Sy proved too much for Niko Katigbak, 6-2, 6-0, yesterday to spearhead the march of the boys' 14-under first-round winners in the Alibor-St. Benilde Age-Group Tennis Championships at Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Also advancing were Juan Felipe Mayor, who scored a 6-0, 6-1 victory ober Joshua Malapira, and Christian Delavin, a 6-0, 6-2 winner over Abraham Bergado. In the boys' 12-under division, Christopher Reyes downed Mark Vincent Dubanzet, 7-5, 6-1, Alberto Villamor outclassed Marco Suntay, 6-1, 6-1, Justin Echague clobbered Joseph Suyosa, 6-1, 6-2, and Raj Dycoco demolished Jacob Lagman, 6-1, 6-1, to advance in the next round. In the unisex 10-under category, No. 2 Juan Pocholo Macalino blanked Aileen Enilo, 6-0, 6-0, No. 4 Sally Mae Siso whipped Anito Preito, 6-0, 6-0, No. 5 Alberto Villamor downed Ronnel Santiago, 6-0, 6-2 and No. 7 Jacob Lagman ripped Tim Polero, 6-1, 6-2, to reach the second round.

### Pampanga Dragons joining NBL

PAMPANGA's fiery Dragons will make a comeback in regional basketball when they compete in the National Basketball League's first national championship starting on May 24 in Ozamiz City. The first national champion of the defunct MBA (Metropolitan Basketball Association), the Dragons hope to repeat history by bagging the first NBL national title. A new management group has taken over the Dragons led by Lubao town mayor Dennis G. Pineda and head coach Alan N. Trinidad. Like in 1998, the Dragons have formed an all-Pampango lineup composed of Dave Bautista, Billy Bansil, Arnel Manalac, Vincent John Santos, Welihado Duyag, Romel Dizon, Ronald Ruiz, Randy Magpayo, Elbert Alberto, Rick Coronel, Erwin Manlutac, Marlon Tadeo and Sherwin Garcia. "We are confident of making history anew," said coach Trinidad of his team's stint in the tourney sponsored by Tanduay Rhum, Fortune Tobacco, Air Philippines, Sulpicio Lines, Gatorade and Molten Basketballs. Meanwhile, NBL secretary general Tito Palma announced that businessman Marton Uy has been tapped by Gov. George Arnaiz and Rep. Jing Paras to manage the Negros Oriental cagers.

### Bata-Django showdown in Legazpi

REYES

BICOLANO billiards fanatics are in for a big treat as Filipino cue masters Efren "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante square off in "Duelo sa Bicol II" on May 28 as part of the month-long Magayon Festival in Albay province. The event will be held at the Albay Astrodome in Legazpi City. In "Duelo sa Bicol I" held last year, Reyes beat Leonardo "Dodong" Andam. There will also be a celebrity basketball game featuring movie and TV personalities playing against a local selection. Other events are the outdoor Gameplan-Del Monte 202 Magayon Challenge, a San Miguel basketball exhibition game presented by the Rotary Club, open water kayak and sailing competitions, an inter-collegiate beach front summer volleyball, scooter race, and the Magayon Climb where participants will scale Mounts Malinao and Masaraga.

### Mandaluyong meet on today

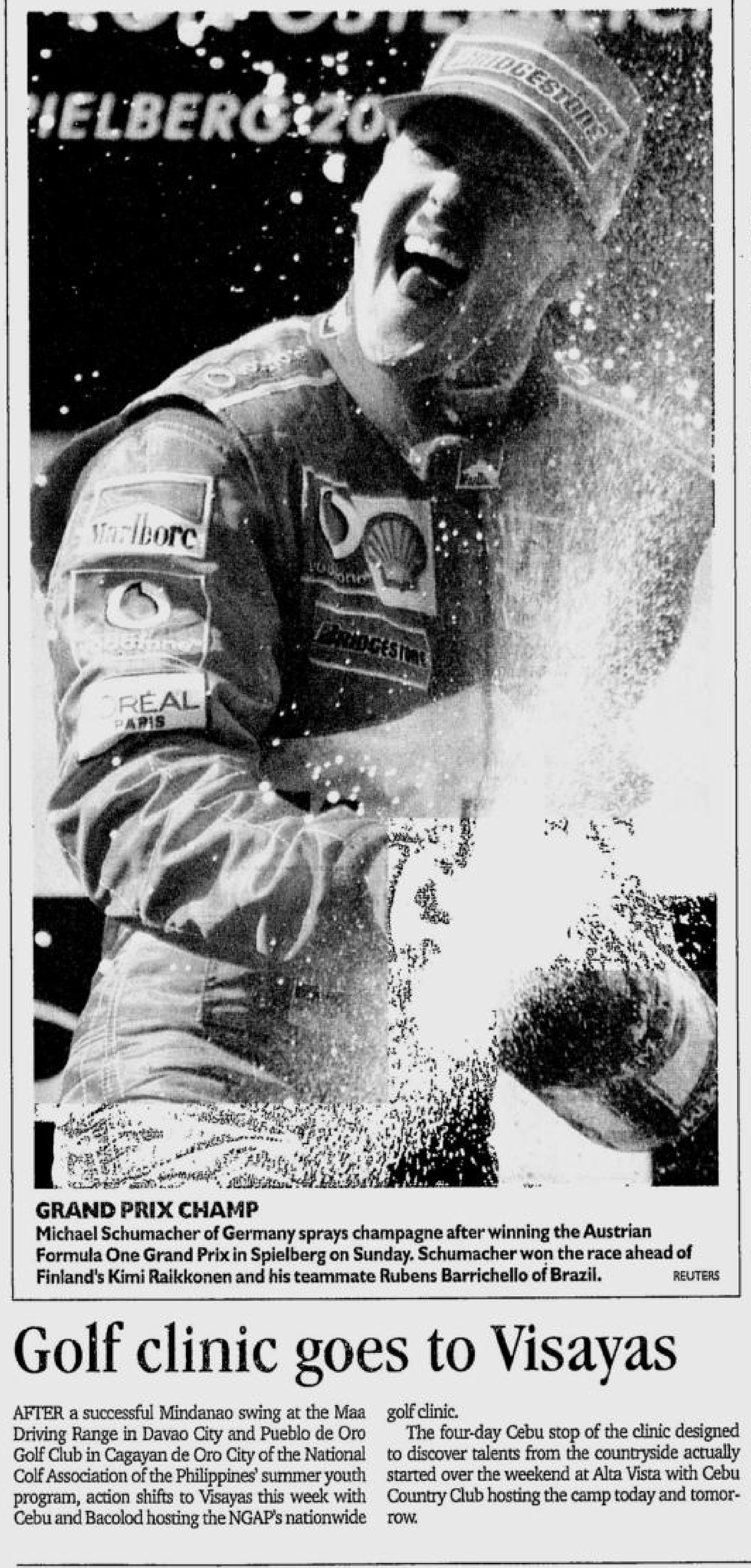
MANDALUYONG Coliseum's "11th Ucap Arnis Master 7-Cock Derby," to be hosted by well-liked sportsman Raymond Velayo, fires off at 4 p.m. today with more than 60 fights on tap. Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Washout Shampoo from Lakpue Drug. Practically the same cast in the recent "Battle of the Giants 7-Cock Derby" are seeing action in the event like Sen. Robert Barbers, former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, Mayor Boyet Joson of Nueva Ecija, Gov. Tony Kho of Masbate, Mauro Prieto of Palawan, Jessie Viceo, LGBA Cocker of the Year Jay Sonza, Sonny Lagon, Patrick Antonio, Wacky Salud of Cebu, and OPMI president Vic Yu, among others. Interested parties may contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 535-2341 and 534-4110.

### 72 fights scheduled at Roligon

SOME 72 exciting fights await cocking aficionados of Roligon Mega Cockpit as the "Captain 4-Cock Derby" gets going at 7 tonight. At stake here is a whopping guaranteed prize money of P300,000 while entry fee is pegged at P10,000. To host the event is well-known cocker-sportsman Capt. Digman. Participants are reminded to submit their entries today, from 6 a.m. to 12 noon. For inquiries, contact 833-2275 and 833-1638. Meanwhile, slated on Saturday, May 24, is the regular 2-cock *ulutan* which will be hosted by Mega Promotions. The first champion will get P15,000; second, P12,000; third, P10,000 and fourth, P1,300.

### Cup relocation costs China $193M

SHANGHAI—The relocation of the women's World Cup over SARS fears is likely to cost China more than 1.6 billion yuan ($193 million), far higher than first thought, state press reported Monday. The cities of Shanghai, Wuhan, Chengdu and Hangzhou, where 32 games were to be held from Sept. 23 to Oct. 11, expect to see direct losses of 100 million yuan, Liu Shengjia, an expert with the Central China Normal University, was cited as saying by the Economic Observer. In addition, the four cities had been expected to pull in World Cup-related tourism revenues of 1.5 billion yuan, said Liu. The China Football Association (CFA) has said it expected three million dollars in lost revenue from ticket prices averaging 30 yuan, as contracts with ticket sellers, communication equipment suppliers and souvenir suppliers have been cancelled. *AFP*


**GRAND PRIX CHAMP**
Michael Schumacher of Germany sprays champagne after winning the Austrian Formula One Grand Prix in Spielberg on Sunday. Schumacher won the race ahead of Finland's Kimi Raikkonen and his teammate Rubens Barrichello of Brazil. REUTERS

## Golf clinic goes to Visayas

AFTER a successful Mindanao swing at the Maa Driving Range in Davao City and Pueblo de Oro Golf Club in Cagayan de Oro City of the National Golf Association of the Philippines' summer youth program, action shifts to Visayas this week with Cebu and Bacolod hosting the NGAP's nationwide golf clinic.

The four-day Cebu stop of the clinic designed to discover talents from the countryside actually started over the weekend at Alta Vista with Cebu Country Club hosting the camp today and tomorrow.

## Harrington firms up No. 1 spot in Europe

HARRINGTON

ALVESLOHE, Germany—Padraig Harrington's dramatic win in the Deutsche Bank-SAP Open here Sunday confirmed his position as Europe's No. 1 and the Irishman now harbors global ambitions.

Harrington came to northern Germany following the 19th runners-up finish of his career at last week's B and H International at The Belfry, but he left it with the sweet smell of success once again on his tastebuds.

And the Dubliner says that at 31, he has yet to reach his full potential.

"I'm learning a lot at the moment," he said after his play-off victory over Denmark's Thomas Bjorn which hoisted him to the top of the European Order of Merit ahead of the big summer tournaments just around the corner.

The triumph was all the sweeter in that he comfortably saw of the imposing threat of the sport's dominant figure Tiger Woods playing with him in the first two rounds, and distancing the American by a whopping nine strokes.

Next up comes an assault on Woods' US Open title at Olympia Fields outside Chicago in a month's time, an event last won by a European in 1970 when Tony Jacklin was at his prime. *AFP*

## Negrido posts 7-stroke lead

NONOY Negrido carded a one-under-par 71 yesterday to assume a seven-stroke lead in boys Class A (15-17 years) at the start of the Samsung Jungolf Tour at the rolling Tat Filipinas Golf Club course in San Pedro, Laguna.

The burly Negrido, fresh from a respectable stint in the recent RP Amateurs at Riviera where he made it to the quarterfinals, returned to the summer circuit to open up a hefty lead over last week's division winner Aaron Dimabuyo (78).

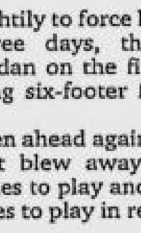
In boys Class B (13-14) years, Gino Bunyi was nursing a one-stroke lead over Miko Yee with his 77 while Martha Buensalida was the runaway leader in the girls side despite a 113.

Over at the par-54 Riviera Executive course, Wolen Juan Superal returned to a short layout but saw his streak of under-par rounds come to end.

Superal's 56 was his first over-par score in 10 rounds, all of which he scored in the long courses (Orchard, Sherwood Hills and Canlubang).

## Best argument

**SPECTATOR**



*Al S. Mendoza*

THE BEST argument for Jerome Delariarte turning professional now is not Bong Lopez, although a Bong Lopez brief will be hard to rebut anytime.

But the best argument for Jerome Delariarte turning professional now is Jerome Delariarte himself.

*"Puwedeng puwede na.* He's ready for the pros," Bong Lopez told our Jong Arcano moments after Jerome won the Philippine Amateur Golf crown on Sunday at Riviera's Langer.

Bong, of course, is the coach of Jerome. Bong, with whom I shared a memorable experience in the international golf scene not too long ago when he was coach of an RP Team that I had captained, is now the hottest swing guru in town. Among his students are Jenny Rosales, Heidi Chua, Gerald Rosales and Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato.

I remember Bong said some years back: "Cassius Casas is ready to turn pro. In fact, he will make waves if he turns pro now."

Casas heeded Bong's advice. In his debut, Casas beat the illustrious Gary Player at Wack Wack. Casas would quickly establish himself as one of the nation's top parbusters; he still is today.

I have the same feeling that if Delariarte leaves the amateur ranks now, he will create an immediate impact on his debut in the Tour. The kid has the makings of a new golf star.

Before Sunday's final, Jerome Delariarte was forced to a sudden-death duel three times. Each time, he passed the test with flying colors.

That is a rare trait you find in nuts that are tough to crack.

It is not very often that we see a guy come along with the potential to excel. Jerome fits that to a T.

After topping the 36-hole medal play with ease, Jerome needed 22 holes to parry the upset ax poised by Jonard Rates in the first round of match play. Had he beaten Delariarte, Rates, the son of a retired touring professional, would have scored only his second biggest victory after winning the Uratex National Caddies Open last November at Valley.

Next, Jerome had to survive SEA Games gold medalist Juvic Pagunsan in 20 holes, before fashioning out several unbelievable escape acts against Marvin Dumandan in the semifinals to force the grueling 36-hole championship showdown with Boyet Saragoza that ended dramatically on the 35th.

Delariarte had to rally mightily to force his third sudden-death in three days, then nipped the faltering Dumandan on the first extra hole with a scrambling six-footer for par.

Dumandan had always been ahead against Delariarte on Saturday, but blew away a three-hole lead with four holes to play and a two-hole lead with three holes to play in regulation.

Dumandan, who played in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games, was totally crushed when he missed a tying 5-footer on the 19th.

But while it was a heartbreaker of a windup for Dumandan, the kid from Bukidnon still had plenty to thank for insofar as rebuilding his career was concerned.

Taken in initially as a helper at Riviera by Lewis Rissman, Dumandan, whose career was going nowhere after unsuccessful stints in the national team, got the break of his life when Rissman took hold of Dumandan's career. Rissman, Riviera's golf director, gave Dumandan two days off from his work each week to hone up his skills. Add to that Rissman's special task of working up the mental aspect of the game, an area where Dumandan, a long hitter with no consistent direction, is very deficient of.

It is in that department actually where Delariarte seems to have a wellspring. Delariarte's strong mind gave him superb control of his game for the 144 holes that he played from Tuesday to Sunday last week. Each time a disaster faced him, he never lost grip of the handle.

Of course, it helped that Jerome's father, based in Manado, Indonesia, was around on the Sunday that Jerome would beat Saragoza, 3 & 1, to become the seventh player to win it back-to-back.

Said Jerome: "It's a good feeling when you achieve something like this and he's around with my mom."

How can one argue with that?

***

*FASTBREAK.* Dirk Nowitzki had Jerome Delariarte's feelings when his high school coach in Germany flew to the US to watch Nowitzki and the Dallas Mavericks eliminate the Sacramento Kings in the NBA Western Conference playoffs. "With him around, I had an extra powerful backer behind me," said Nowitzki, who fired a game-high 30 points and grabbed 19 rebounds in Dallas' 112-99 Game 7 win over Sacramento. Nowitzki, belittled by a newspaper by giving him a 20-1 rating to star for Dallas in that game, returns to the court today in Game 1 of the all-Texas Western final between Dallas and San Antonio. Good thing IBC 13 will air the game starting at 9:30 a.m. It's been almost two months since I applied for a Sky reconnection but until now, a Sky lineman has yet to show up. What gives?

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GLORIETTA 1
1 WALANG KAPALIT
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3 X-MEN 2
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

**G4**
GLORIETTA 4
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE MATRIX RELOADED 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
4 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
5 X-MEN 2
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED
7 WALANG KAPALIT

**GB1**
GREENBELT 1
ArtFilm
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2 THE MATRIX RELOADED 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
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**GB3**
GREENBELT 3
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 THE MATRIX RELOADED 12:55, 3:50, 6:45, 9:40
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 THE MATRIX RELOADED 2:05, 5:00, 7:55, 10:50
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:20
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2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 WALANG KAPALIT

**SM CINEMA TUTUBAN**
2514302
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 KIKAY

**SM CITY DAVAO**
2976988
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 X-MEN 2
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU
5 JUNGLE BOOK 2
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED

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776-3055
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2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

**SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO**
859-2884
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 JUNGLE BOOK 2
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

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1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
11:10 FS/11:40 MF/2:30/5:20/8:10/
10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:25 END
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
11:05 MF/1:50/4:40/9:55 LFS/
10:20 LMF/12:45 END

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3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 MATRIX RELOADED
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
8 THE HOURS
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6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 MATRIX RELOADED

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Marcos hway
1 X-MEN 2
2 THE HOURS
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU
6 MATRIX RELOADED
7 KIKAY
8 WALANG KAPALIT

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4 THE HOURS
5 BEHIND THE GREEEN DOORS
6 KIKAY
7 TILL THERE WAS YOU
8 WALANG KAPALIT

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2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 MATRIX RELOADED
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6 MATRIX RELOADED

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3 TILL THERE WAS YOU
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 KIKAY

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2 MATRIX RELOADED
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU

**Bacolod** 441- 0453 / 0459
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 X-MEN 2
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU
6 JUNGLE BOOK 2

**Iloilo** 336- 8077 - 78
1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 RING 2
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 JUNGLE BOOK 2

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# GMA 7: It's a neck-and-neck race. . .

From page A28

"ABS-CBN has long since invested in their dramas," he said. "Naturally, it can be expected that a certain amount of time is needed to develop our own programs and the necessary understanding of the formats and experience to be able to put up a sustainable battle.

"Our first real investment in the drama format was 'Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin' two years ago," Duavit offered. "The gap in the ratings then was very wide. But recently, our soaps were behind ABS-CBN's by about four to five points. The gap has considerably narrowed."

Duavit attributes the high ratings of "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin" to the popularity of the young stars in the cast.

He said a large chunk of GMA 7's production budget goes to the soaps because of their big stars and locations.

"Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw Pa Rin," for instance, stars Christopher de Leon and Richard Gomez. "Kung Mawawala Ka" is directed by award-winning Joel Lamangan.

## 2 new movies

Duavit said that in the coming months, GMA 7 will also produce made-for-TV drama specials, like its popular "Telesines."

He said he does not mind that GMA 7 has become the "dumping ground" of talents who have left the rival network, such as Richard Gomez, Pops Fernandez, Jolina Magdangal, Amy Perez and Ariel Rivera.

"Even before Richard signed up with GMA, there was already the soap 'Ang Iibigin ay Ikaw' with the character of Waldo," Duavit said. "The writer, Gina Marissa-Tagasa, saw Goma as perfect for the Waldo character. Then, we learned that Goma had wanted to diversify into that type of program."

Aside from the network beefing up its TV programs to keep up with the competition, GMA Films is also is planning two new movies. The previous production of the film arm of GMA Network was Lamangan's "Deathrow," an entry in the 2000 Metro Manila Film Festival, starring Eddie Garcia and Cogie Domingo.

Looks can be deceiving.
So Close

MTRCB R-13
Strictly for 13 years of age and up

Sexy Asian angels display amazing martial arts techniques in 'So Close'

Lynn (Shu Qi) and Sue (Zhao Wei) are sexy and beautiful sisters whose parents were brutally killed by powerful underworld figures. Disillusioned with the law and armed with amazing computer and kung fu skills (not to mention an enviable fashion style), the seductive sisters become professional assassins, killing criminals for other criminals.

Gutsy and brilliant female cop Yat Hong (Karen Mok) relentlessly pursue the sisters, who are in turn fascinated by their tough adversary.

SO CLOSE, starring Asia's most alluring and talented young actresses, features the coolest, breath-taking martial arts sequences from world-renowned director Cory Yuen, Jet Li's martial arts choreographer in THE ONE, KISS OF THE DRAGON and ROMEO MUST DIE. Don't miss it!

OPENS TOMORROW!

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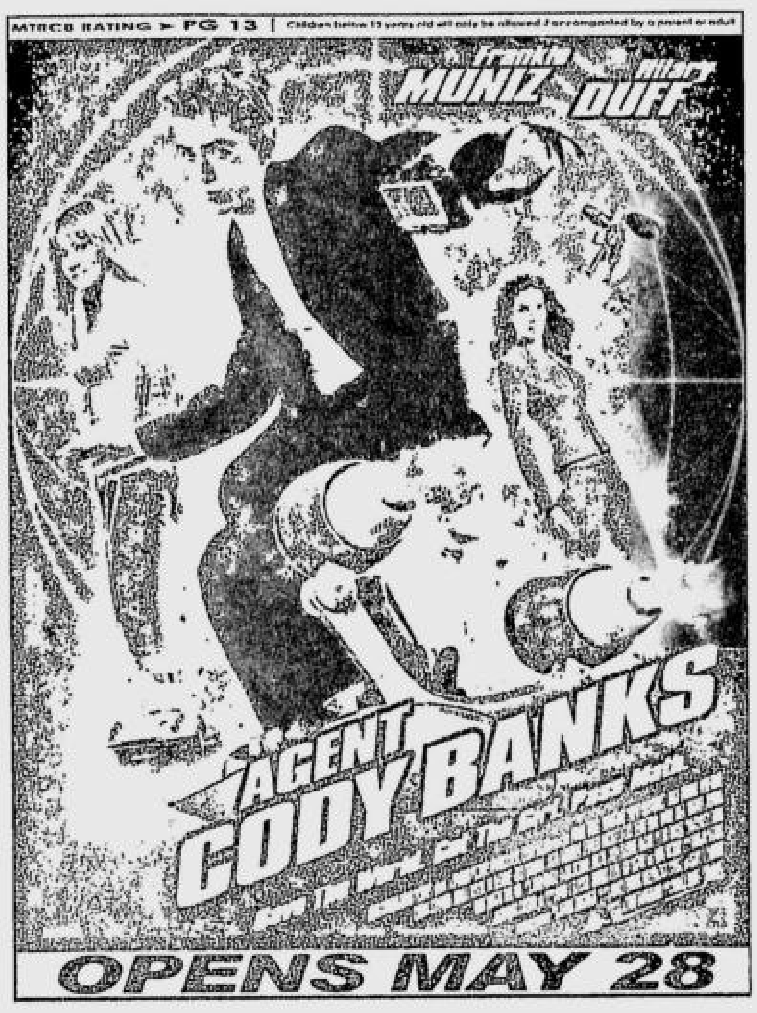
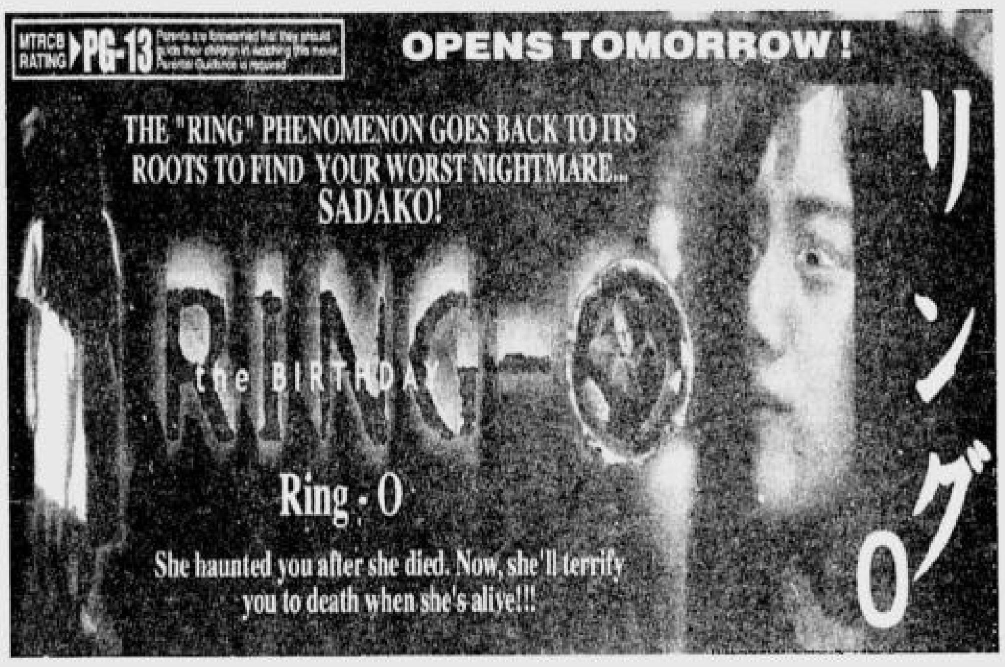


OPENS MAY 28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Araneta Center
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|---|---|
| Ali 1 | TILL THERE WAS YOU |
| Ali 2 | WALANG KAPALIT |
| Ali 3 | X-MEN 2 |
| Ali 4 | MATRIX RELOADED |
| Ali 5 | MATRIX RELOADED |
| Ali 6 | THE HOURS |
| Ali 7 | KIKAY |
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| MAY 25 | PBA GAMES |
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Cogie Domingo Maxene Magalona
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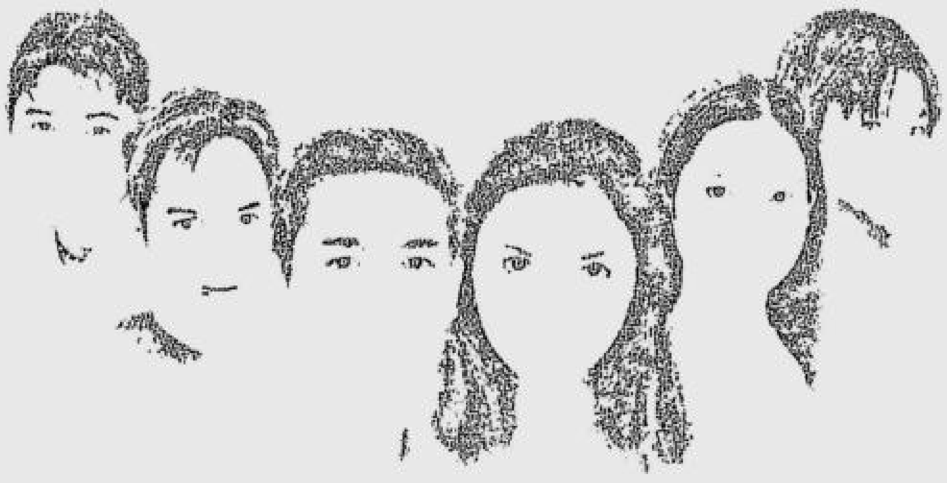

Kung bawa't anak
ay anghel sa lupa,
bawa't ina ay langit.

Anghel Sa Lupa

Directed By
Jose Javier Reyes, dgpi

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|---|---|---|
| MATRIX: RELOADED<br>R13<br>1:45, 4:35,<br>7:25, 10:15 | MATRIX: RELOADED<br>R13<br>12:40,3:30,<br>6:20,9:10 | MATRIX: RELOADED<br>R13<br>1:15,4:05,<br>6:55,9:45 |
| MATRIX: RELOADED<br>R13<br>2:20,5:10,<br>8:00,10:45 | THE HOURS<br>R13<br>12:20,2:45,5:10,<br>7:35,10:00 | MATRIX: RELOADED<br>R13<br>12:05,2:55,5:45,<br>8:35,11:20 |

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| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | CLOSED |
| MIRAMAR | SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA |
| ODEON | X-MEN 2 |
| ODEON-2 | BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN |
| ROBEN | BOLD STAR |
| TANDEM-1 | SUGAT |
| TANDEM-2 | KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO |
| TIMES | SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE |
| **QUEZON CITY** | |
| ACT-1 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| ACT-2 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| ACT-3 | ORIGINAL SIN |
| ACT-4 | HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY |
| CORONET A | KIKAY |
| CORONET B | A MAN APART |
| QUEZON-1 | PUNLA |
| REMAR | X-MEN 2 |
| REMAR-2 | BOLD STAR |
| **NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA** | |
| A | WALANG KAPALIT |
| B | KIKAY |
| C | |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
| SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL | 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70 |
| CINEMA-1 | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| CINEMA-2 | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **CAINTA RIZAL** | |
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-5401 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | WALANG KAPALIT |
| CINEMA-2 | KIKAY |
| CINEMA-3 | TILL THERE WAS YOU |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | MATRIX RELOADED |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | MATRIX RELOADED |
| CINEMA-6 | XEREX |
| CINEMA-7 | BAYARAN |
| CINEMA-8 | PINOCCHIO |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | MATRIX RELOADED |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | MATRIX RELOADED |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | MATRIX RELOADED |
| CINEMA-12 | THE HOURS |
| CINEMA-14 | X-MEN 2 |
| CINEMA-15 | WALANG KAPALIT |
| **LORES** | |
| CINEMA-2 | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| CINEMA-3 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| **NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN** | |
| CINEMA 1 | WALANG KAPALIT |
| CINEMA 2 | MATRIX RELOADED |
| CINEMA 3 | X-MEN 2 |
| CINEMA 4 | TILL THERE WAS YOU |
| **UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL** | |
| (PARAÑAQUE) | SENSUAL ISLAND |
| CINEMA-1 | KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT |
| CINEMA-2 | MEN IN BLACK II |
| CINEMA-4 | SELDA |

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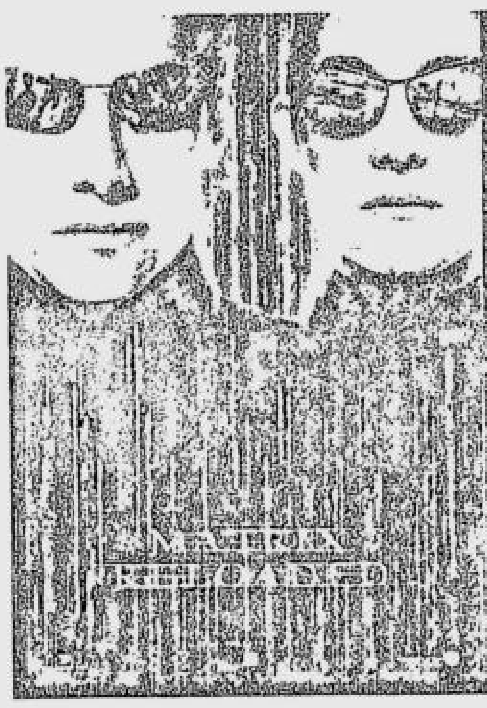

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MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

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### URIAN SIDELIGHTS

# Gentlemen, studs and winners

CRITICS' CHOICES. Urian picks (from left) Piolo Pascual, Jay Manalo, Vilma Santos, Gil Portes, Elizabeth Oropesa and Ricky Lee.

**By Marinel R. Cruz**

GAWAD Urian best supporting actor Piolo Pascual ("Dekada '70") arrived early at the awards ceremony Saturday night and reserved a seat for "Dekada '70" costar Vilma Santos, who would later be declared best actress.

Vilma and Piolo played mother and son in the moving Chito Roño movie based on the screenplay by Lualhati Bautista, who won for best screenplay.

Piolo was very affectionate to "mom" Vilma, hugging and kissing her when she arrived. He was seen clasping her hands moments before his name was announced as best supporting actor at the Teatro Arturo Enrile in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

A very slim-looking Judy Ann Santos handed the award to Piolo and she stood beside him as he made his acceptance speech. They starred in the recent hit "Till There Was You."

Piolo performed with Ciara Sotto, Aiza Seguerra, Gloc 9, 17:28, 604 Band and guitarist Mel Villena in a production number near the end of the show.

"I really made time to record my song for the production number," Piolo told INQUIRER Entertainment. "I consider it my way of sharing all my blessings."

***

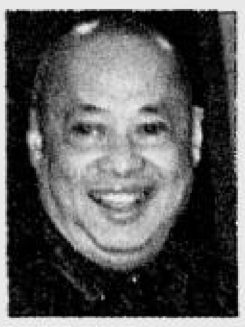
Jay Manalo, the bold stud in such sexy movies as "Totoy Mola" and "Gayuma," won much-deserved respect and admiration as well as the best actor award for his performance as a pimp smitten with a prostitute (Aubrey Miles) in Erick Matti's "Prosti."

Jay earlier starred in three critically acclaimed Joel Lamangan films—"Hubog," "Mano Po," and "Abandonada."

Jay was also widely praised for his work in "Paraisong Parisukat" opposite former girlfriend Joyce Jimenez. He will soon be seen in another Lamangan film, "Huling Birhen sa Lupa," with Gina Alajar, Maui Taylor and Ara Mina.

**WHOLE WIT.** Lone host and funny man Edu Manzano.

**AIZA'S EYES.** Seguerra sings a soulful song.



**HIGH GIL.** Best director Portes.

'SEX' PAUSE. Rufa Mae Quinto (third from left) performs with Sex Bomb dancers.

PHOTOS BY AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Jay bested "veterans" Ricky Davao ("American Adobo"), Christopher de Leon ("Dekada '70"), Rudy Fernandez ("Diskarte"), Aga Muhlach ("Kailangan Kita"), and Albert Martinez ("Laman"), as well as newcomers Vhong Navarro ("Jologs") and Yul Servo ("Laman").

***

The movie critics' group paid tribute to writer Ricardo "Ricky" Lee by naming him the recipient of the Natatanging Gawad for lifetime achievement for his invaluable contributions to the film industry for more than three decades.

The award was handed to him by three of the many actresses who breathed life to his creations —Vilma ("Relasyon"), Dina Bonnevie ("Gumapang Ka Sa Lusak") and Gina Alajar ("Salome").

Lee has so far written about 120 screenplays and won some 50 awards. His most recent work, Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Bagong Buwan," was honored by many local and international award-giving bodies.

"Writers like me belong to the invisible force behind some of the most successful films," Lee said in his speech. "Almost often, there is no mention of us in movie trailers and promotional materials. We long for the same respect and attention given to movie directors and actors."

***

Edu Manzano was very effective as the show's only host. He kept the audience awake and laughing with his witty remarks, delivered with his trademark deadpan expression.

Even Piolo and Vilma were not spared from Edu's jokes. He imitated Piolo after the young actor delivered a very emotional acceptance speech. When Vilma said she was sharing her award with her costars in "Dekada 70," particularly to her "eldest son" Piolo, the camera caught Edu having his own "dramatic highlight."

"What?" he asked his ex-wife in mock surprise. "*Anak natin si* Piolo?"

***

The awards show was scheduled to start at 6 p.m. but actually opened two hours later. The AFP Theater was filled despite other entertainment events that night, such as Nora Aunor's birthday concert at the Araneta Coliseum, Kuh Ledesma's show at the Music Museum and Ayen Munji's at the Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Hotel.

Asia's Songbird Regine Velasquez did the opening number by singing some of her hits. Her "SOP" co-hosts Ogie Alcasid and Rufa Mae Quinto did a comedy skit with Michael V, Marissa Sanchez and the Sexbomb Dancers in the second half of the show.

Janno Gibbs, Michael Santana and Anna Fegi sang a medley of the theme songs of Urian's best picture nominees, before Gil Portes' "Mga Munting Tinig" and Chito Roño's "Dekada '70" were announced co-winners.

THEME TRIO. (From left) Michael Santana, Anna Fegi and Janno Gibbs sing the theme songs of the best picture nominees.

# This musician should learn to respect women

**DOLLY WOOD**

*Dolly Ann Carvajal*

I DON'T know why unwed mothers who have love children with celebrities tend to run to me, but I welcome the chance to be of help to them in my own little way. Perhaps it's because I'm a single mom and I've always had an absentee father. Women in distress make my heart bleed for them instantly because our pain is quite similar though of different intensities.

Two years ago I came out with the scoop about **Vandolph**'s love child **Gabrielle** with **Guia Avante**, who's not from show biz. A friend of Guia's e-mailed me and from then on the Avantes have been like family to me. They even got me to be one of Gabrielle's godmothers.

At first, Vandolph wouldn't budge but I'm happy that eventually he softened up. Now he has not only acknowledged his daughter's existence but he also spends quality time with her every chance he gets.

This time around, a friend from the music scene approached me on one of my nights out. She told me she wants justice for her friend who's a singer in a band. It turns out that I also know the girl since she used to sing with a very popular band and my brother once hired the band for a show some years ago.

## Charges filed

Her story is sort of connected to the blind item I came out with about two band members allegedly raping two singers of another band during their gig in Hong Kong.

According to my *musikero* friends, that item caused quite a stir and prompted some OPM officers to look into the case. In fact, the two band members are now banned from playing for any professional band because of their lewd behavior. The two singers also pressed charges against the two guys, and the case is now pending in court.

One of the guys has been living in with a multi-awarded dramatic actress and they have a son. I bumped into them in Enchanted Kingdom last month and I told them I wanted to air their side of the story but they were not too keen about it. They told me to just let the issue slide so I left it at that. But I was wondering why the guy wouldn't even bother to clear his name if he's not guilty at all.

I found the missing link after hearing out the story of my friend. I know that the dramatic actress will be enraged when she reads this. As a woman herself, she would feel the pain of the other women. Maybe he'll finally clean up his act. And in the long run she will benefit from it because she can be assured that he will no longer fool around.

My friend even told me that I can go right ahead and identify the guy. But since the actress is a colleague, I would rather spare her from a full-blown scandal. As she had told me in Enchanted Kingdom, "It's the girls who approach and flirt with him so it's not his fault."

I admire the way she stands by her man. So very **Hillary Clinton**. I could relate to what she said because I also turn deaf and blind when I'm in love. At the same time my heart goes out to her.

Maybe he has mellowed, but he must settle the unfinished business with the two singers.

## I night in Cebu

Here's my friend's story:

"The band did the front act for a foreign band in Cebu. Since they had been bandmates for a long time, the singer treated the musician like a brother. One night he knocked on her room. She was the one who always brought junk food for the band and he wanted to eat. He asked her if he could just hang out and watch TV in her room.

"The singer let him in and went about her nightly rituals. She took sleeping pills and soon enough she dozed off.

"When she woke up in the morning, she felt strange but she just chose to ignore it. After three months of missing her period she got alarmed. She knew for sure that she hadn't had sex for the past months and she didn't have a boyfriend. So when she found out she was pregnant she tried to trace how it came about.

## No to DNA test

"That night in Cebu suddenly hit her. He called up the musician and after much pleading from her, he finally admitted that he did molest her while she was sleeping. The sleeping pills she took really make you dead to the world, that's why she didn't wake up when he did the 'crime.'

"He offered her a car, a house and even cash on the condition that she would abort the baby, but she refused. The baby boy is now a year and a half old. The singer has three teenage kids with her ex-husband and she has explained to them what happened.

"Just to prove to the guy that he is really the father of her baby, she asked him to undergo a DNA test. At first he agreed, but he backed out at the last minute. She is not after support because she can afford to raise the baby on her own.

"After being jobless when she was pregnant, she is now back in the music scene as the lead singer of a band.

"If he has molested the two singers, who knows if he has abused other women who are not in the limelight. It's about time he learned how to respect women."

## Laughter in a Box

I HAD a blast with my dear friends **Goulee Gorospe** and **Cerena Masu** at the 19th anniversary celebration of the first and original stand-up comic place, the Music Box at the corner of Timog and Quezon Avenue. MB is where first-rate comedians like **Ai-Ai de las Alas** and **Arnel Ignacio** were discovered. To this day, they still drop by the place when their schedule permits, which only goes to show that all the fame has not made them lose sight of their humble beginnings.

Thanks to the *muy gracioso* owner of MB, **Wowie de Dios** , my longtime friend **Boy Palma** and their wacky manager **Gary** for the red carpet treatment.

Kudos to the MB's current crop of comedians—**Gee, Beauty, Kaka, Jerry Poyay** and **Jeff Vasquez** —for their incredible talent.

As one of my fave quote says, "Laughter is God's hand on a troubled world." And at MB, the laughs just keep on coming.

*For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com or jaimealsan@yahoo.com*

# Three in a row

From page A28

contemporary classics composed by **George Canseco, Willy Cruz, Louie Ocampo, Ryan Cayabyab, Danny Tan** and **Ogie Alcasid**.

Llana started acting onstage in the States only in 1996, but he's already chalked up performances in an impressive number of major productions: He was Lun Tha in the Broadway revival of "The King and I," starring fellow Fil-American **Lou Diamond Philips**.

He was in "On the Town" at the New York Shakespeare Festival; in the Motown revue "Street Corner Symphony"; in the world premiere of "Ballad of Little Jo" at the Steppenwolf Theater Company.

Next, he was handpicked by **Cameron Mackintosh** to lead the American cast of the musical "Martin Guerre." Then came "Flower Drum Song," as well as some TV shows and albums.

After seven years of singing, acting and dancing in the States, Jose Llana is in the Philippines on a working visit. Hopefully, he's here to stay.

Incidentally, other Fil-American actors will be coming to Manila to perform in the Sangandaan arts festival at the CCP next month. Among them are the young actors in Ma-Yi Theater Co.'s production, "The Romance of Magno Rubio."

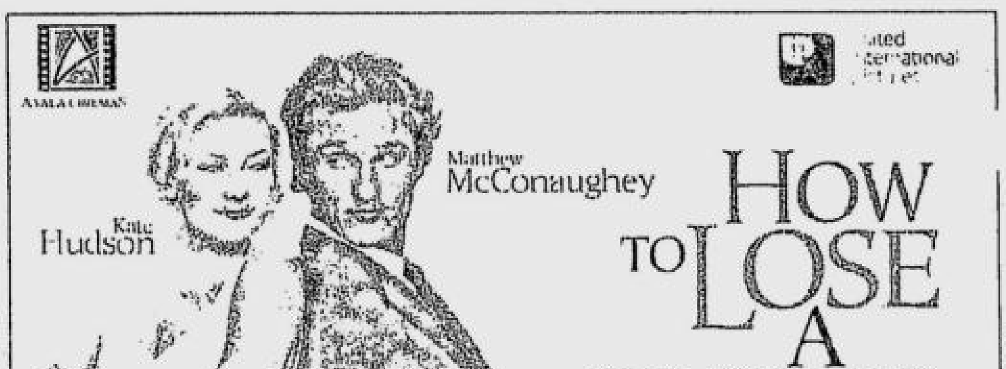
This early, we hear that some movie producers here are interested in casting a couple of the Ma-Yi actors in their forthcoming productions. Let's hope they can speak Filipino well!

## On Star Movies

THIS month, Star Movies screens these films at 9 p.m.: Tuesday, May 20, "Woman on Top" with **Penelope Cruz**. Wednesday, May 21, "Kiss of the Dragon" with **Jet Li** and **Bridget Fonda**.

Thursday, May 22, "Mad Love" with **Drew Barrymore** and **Chris O'Donnell**. Friday, May 23, "My Best Friend's Wedding" with **Julia Roberts, Dermot Mulroney** and **Cameron Diaz**.

Saturday, May 24, "Waterworld" with **Kevin Costner**. Sunday, May 25, "Corky Romano" with **Chris Kattan**. Monday, May 26, "Selena" with **Jennifer Lopez**.



AYALA CINEMAS
Kate Hudson
Matthew McConaughey
HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN 10 DAYS
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
OPENS MAY 21 AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS

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GREG KINNEAR & WILLEM DAFOE
A peek into the secret life of Hollywood celebrity known to audiences as the star of 1960s TV series Hogan's Heroes, Bob Crane. But behind the loving wife (RITA WILSON), the successful comedic career & the public adoration lies an obsession for the forbidden. Auto Focus chronicles Bob Crane's downward spiral into erotic addiction from his promiscuous lifestyle & unconventional hobbies to his mysterious death.
Auto Focus creates an absorbing portrait of a man whose carnal hunger brought about his eventual down fall as an actor, a father & a man.
COFFEE CLUB DISCUSSION ON "AUTO FOCUS" on May 21 at 7pm.
For inquiries, contact 752-7866 or 752-7872.
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# ENTERTAINMENT

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*Editor* **Louie C. Camino**

# GMA 7: It's a neck-and-neck race with ABS-CBN

**By Leah Salterio**

IT'S A neck-and-neck battle between GMA 7 and ABS-CBN, according to GMA 7 EVP and COO Jimmy Duavit.

The GMA 7 executive also said the network's projected net income of P600 million for 2003 is "attainable."

"As of April, we have restored it to a a neck-and-neck battle," Duavit told INQUIRER Entertainment. "If you go down to specific day parts, we are doing extremely well in the morning, where we are slightly ahead, and in the total afternoon and early primetime from 6 p.m. all the way to the soaps.

"In the late primetime with the sitcoms, the ratings are see-sawing. We see certain days where the competition is doing well. In the late-night time slot, we are doing well in our current affairs programs. The noontime time slot is ours. That's a given because of 'Eat Bulaga'."

He admits, however, that ABS-CBN still dominates the early evening newscast with its "TV Patrol" up against GMA 7's "Frontpage," anchored by Mel Tiangco.

"We are still fractionally behind, but GMA 7 has made very significant gains. Like two weeks ago, there was a day when the ratings with 'TV Patrol' were equal."

GMA 7's "Saksi," however, beats its competitor "Headlines" in the late evening newscast, Duavit said.

**CONFIDENT.** Jimmy Duavit
MIKE ALQUINTO

Mike Enriquez's co-anchor, Vicky Morales, is in the United States, where her husband King Reyno is taking up graduate studies. Bernadette Sembrano has taken over Vicky's anchoring chores on "Saksi."

### Working wonders

Duavit said the network might even increase its target to close to P700 million.

"Our sales and marketing groups have been working wonders," Duavit said. "The advertisers have been very supportive. Relatively, we have been able to contain our production cost. In fact, in many instances, some of our programs came in below the approved budgets. That's a key to sustainability."

Last year, GMA 7 registered a net income of P401 million, significantly bigger than in 2001.

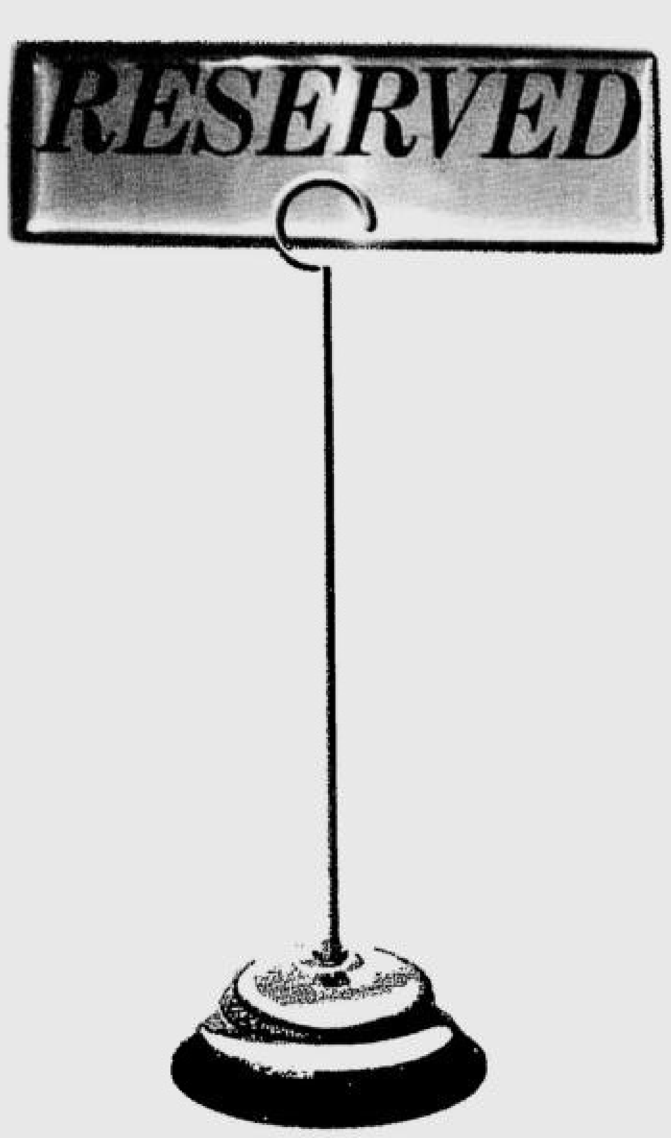
But Duavit refuses to be presumptuous about GMA's prospects in the battle of the networks despite the good ratings and revenues.

"While we are elated by the present results, we always keep an eye internally on what we recognize as our weaknesses," he said. "Looking at the competition and being cognizant of our capabilities and diversity, it's not easy to say that we see ourselves leading by the end of the year and it is very, very difficult to assess. But we will do whatever we can."

### Gap narrows

GMA 7's soaps have also yielded encouraging results after the network junked its counter-programming of animé cartoons against ABS-CBN's dramas.

GMA/ A26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### DID YOU KNOW...

The guessing game is on as to who is going to replace ABS-CBN president **Freddie M. Garcia**, who is set to retire in July when he turns 60. Network executive vice president **Charo Santos-Concio** is said to be the strongest contender for the position, but there are other figures in the short list who also want the position. According to a network insider, these include sales and marketing executive **Nick Gabunada**, special events boss **Monchet Olives** and even **Bon-Bon Jimenez** of the engineering department. *Abangan...*

# Three in a row

VIEWFINDER

*Nestor U. Torre*

AFTER a long slump, local movies are starting to recover lost ground at the box office. Two weeks ago, **Joyce Bernal**'s "Till There Was You" hit it big at the tills, boosting the popularity of the **Juday-Piolo** love team.

Next, "Walang Kapalit" with **Sharon Cuneta** and **Richard Gomez** has just started its run, and hopes are high that it, too, will find favor with moviegoers.

And, at the end of the month, "Pakners" with **Fernando Poe Jr.** and **Efren "Bata" Reyes** will test the popularity of a story involving billiards with the male movie crowd, and could turn out to be a blockbuster.

These are developments that augur well for the Filipino movie industry's recovery this year.

Even better things may be in store for our film people when the Manila Film Festival opens soon. Some filmfest entries are fielding interesting stories and big stellar combinations, so they could become crowd-pleasers as well.

Of course, the industry is still churning out cheap sex flicks but most of them are no longer clicking, even with randy viewers. Now that mainstream stars are staging a comeback, some producers may opt to make non-sexy films, and that would be a relief all around.

However, for positive values to hold sway again on our movie screens, it isn't enough that some producers make good and wholesome films. It's equally important that moviegoers patronize them, so they make more money than sleazy sex flicks, to motivate other producers to prefer quality over porn.

### 'Harry Potter' sets record

"HARRY Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" set a new video record in its first three weeks of release. It sold more than 40,000 video units, outpacing "Harry Potter 1" by a whopping 75 percent.

It grossed over P14 million in combined VCD, DVD and VHS sales nationwide, despite the existence of pirated versions. And it's expected to continue selling well in the weeks ahead.

### Filipino album for Llana

**Jose Llana, Lea Salonga**'s co-star in "Flower Drum Song" on Broadway, is in Manila to record an album for Viva Records. He will sing

THREE/ A27

BUSINESS

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# Gov't contains April budget gap at ₱6.58B

By Clarissa S. Batino

**STRONG revenue collections in April enabled the government to contain its budget deficit for the month at P6.58 billion, the lowest since December 2001 and only about half of the P12-billion target for the month.**

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the Macapagal administration "would fight tooth and nail to sustain this encouraging revenue performance."

In the first four months, the budget gap stood at P65.5 billion or 21 percent lower than the previous year and 2.2 percent below the P67-billion target for the period.

The P5.4-billion leeway from April brought the fiscal numbers back on track. In end-March, the budget deficit was P4.6 billion higher than the P55.2.-billion target.

The government must contain the fiscal gap in the second quarter at P47.043 billion.

"We are pleased with the April numbers and this would go a long way in our ongoing campaign to re-establish the credibility of the fiscal sector," said the finance chief, who is now in Washington, in a phone interview with reporters from Manila.

"The deficit in April is the lowest we've seen in many months. The performance emboldens us to pursue drastic reform measures to instill fiscal discipline on all fronts," Camacho said.

Revenues in April reached P65.94 billion, higher by 9.4 percent or P5.57 billion against the target of P60.27 billion, while expenditures of P72.53 billion slightly exceeded the goal of P72.3 billion.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue delivered P50.38 billion, surpassing its P47.7-billion goal and exceeding last year's numbers by P7.9 billion. The BIR's strong April collection also wiped out most of its P5-billion shortfall in the first quarter.

The Bureau of Customs contributed P8.81 billion to state coffers against a target of P8.1 billion for the month. The Bureau of Treasury raised P3.7 billion while other agencies collecting fees and charges brought in P3.05 billion.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno has vowed to intensify administrative measures to bring in more revenues for the government. The tax mapping and saturation drive where rows of establishments in key cities were subjected to a spot audit starting April is estimated to bring in some P8 billion in additional revenues this year.

Of more than 11,000 establishments inspected, the BIR discovered that more than 95 percent violated tax regulations, including non-registration of their businesses. As a result, there was a 200 percent surge in BIR registration in April to about 61,000 from 18,000 in the same period in 2002.

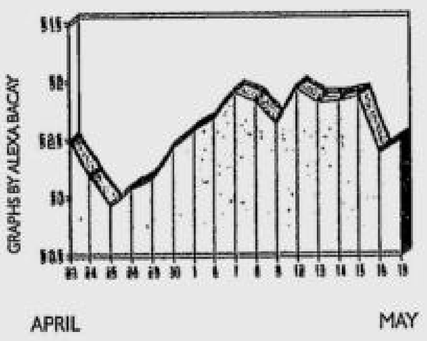
"Non-registration means nonpayment of taxes particularly VAT and income. We intend to collect these back taxes and we estimate to collect between P4.5 billion and P8.6 billion from these companies that have not registered." said the BIR chief.

At an average penalty of P1,000 per violation for those caught during tax mapping, Parayno said the bureau could collect an additional P777.6 million.

Parayno said the bureau would also intensify the audit of taxpayers it had initiated last year where almost 2,000 businesses were caught understating their tax payments and were made to pay a combined P6 billion in liabilities.

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES



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As of 5 p.m., May 19, 2003

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### CURRENCIES

| May 19, 2003<br>Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Dollar Equivalent | Peso Equivalent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 0.862664 | 1.000000 | 52.376000 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.007447 | 0.008633 | 0.452200 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.398982 | 1.621700 | 84.938200 |
| Hongkong | Dollar | 0.110613 | 0.128223 | 6.715800 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.660843 | 0.766049 | 40.122600 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.632684 | 0.733407 | 38.412900 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.499892 | 0.579475 | 30.350600 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.560644 | 0.649899 | 34.039100 |
| Bahrain | Dinar* | 2.288355 | 2.652661 | 138.935800 |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.230038 | 0.266660 | 13.966600 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.498448 | 0.577801 | 30.262900 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000102 | 0.000118 | 0.006200 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.020491 | 0.023753 | 1.244100 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.234885 | 0.272279 | 14.260900 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 1.159200 | 60.714300 |
| Argentina | Peso | 0.301104 | 0.349040 | 18.281300 |
| Brazil | REAL | 0.290068 | 0.336247 | 17.611300 |
| Denmark | Kroner | 0.134415 | 0.155814 | 8.160900 |
| India | Rupee | 0.018347 | 0.021268 | 1.113900 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 0.227047 | 0.263193 | 13.785000 |
| Mexico | New Peso | 0.083778 | 0.097116 | 5.086500 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 0.498880 | 0.578302 | 30.289100 |
| Norway | Kroner | 0.127301 | 0.147567 | 7.729000 |
| Pakistan | Rupee | 0.014972 | 0.017355 | 0.909000 |
| South Africa | Rand | 0.111382 | 0.129114 | 6.762500 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000719 | 0.000833 | 0.043600 |
| Sweden | Kroner | 0.109143 | 0.126518 | 6.626500 |
| Syria | Pound | 0.020540 | 0.023810 | 1.247100 |
| Taiwan | Nt Dollar | 0.024969 | 0.028944 | 1.516000 |
| Venezuela | Bolivar | 0.000541 | 0.000627 | 0.032800 |

### STOCK MARKET

## Stocks end up

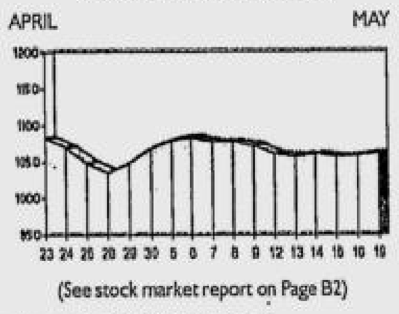
STOCKS ended higher yesterday as investors flocked to PLDT, encouraged by first-quarter results that beat market expectations, traders said.

The country's largest phone firm, and one of the biggest by market capitalization, surged P10, or 2.41 percent, to end at P425, on top turnover of P62.92 million.

The main index ended up 3.41 points, or 0.32 percent, at 1,062.94 points. Turnover, however, remained weak at P185.93 million against P169.77 million last Friday.

*Reuters*

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

# SM to build 3rd mall in Manila

By Doris C. Dumlao

RETAIL tycoon Henry Sy's SM Prime Holdings Inc. will build a 150,000-square meter shopping mall along the San Lazaro racetrack compound, its third in the city of Manila, starting this year.

In an interview, SMPH executive vice president Hans Sy also said the company would start building malls in Marilao, Bulacan; Dasmariñas, Cavite; in Baguio and another in Batangas very soon.

The San Lazaro mall, which will be bigger than the recently opened SM Bicutan mall, will sit on a four-hectare property earlier purchased from the Manila Jockey Club Inc.

The San Lazaro complex will be the shopping mall developer's third in Manila after SM City Mall and SM Quiapo. It is originally scheduled for completion by 2004.

SMPH invests about P2.5 billion to P3 billion each year to build at least two new malls and expand its landbanking. Each new mall costs at least P1 billion to put up.

# RP to be self-sufficient in sugar as output seen hitting 10-yr high

By Christine A. Gaylican

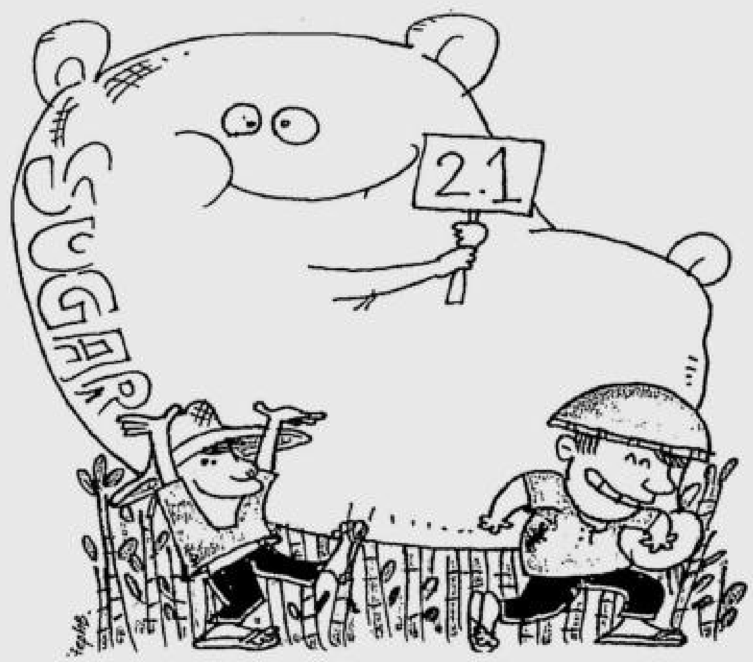
THE PHILIPPINES is close to achieving a sugar production sufficiency level as the expected sugar output in the coming crop year was placed at a 10-year high of 2.1 million metric tons, the Sugar Regulatory Authority said yesterday.

The country's sugar mills are estimated to yield 2.1 million metric tons in the crop year beginning September 2003 to October 2004, exceeding the country's domestic requirement of 1.9 million MT, SRA Administrator James Ledesma told the INQUIRER.

However, he emphasized that the government was not ruling out the possibility of importing sugar mainly for buffer stocks.

The Philippines had earlier committed to import a third of its sugar minimum access volume (MAV) requirements from Thailand.

Ledesma noted though that a decision on whether or not the country would import sugar under the MAV has not been made.



The SRA also took the initiative to engage in an export-import program to correct the excess supply of sugar during the peak milling season between January and February.

Aside from exporting sugar for the US quota requirement of 135,000 to 140,000 MT, the SRA is exploring the possibility of selling sugar at the spot market and buying at the futures market.

With the stock balance of sugar hitting high volumes during the milling season, the SRA is considering the possibility of shipping out part of the inventory during this period and selling it for export to the world market.

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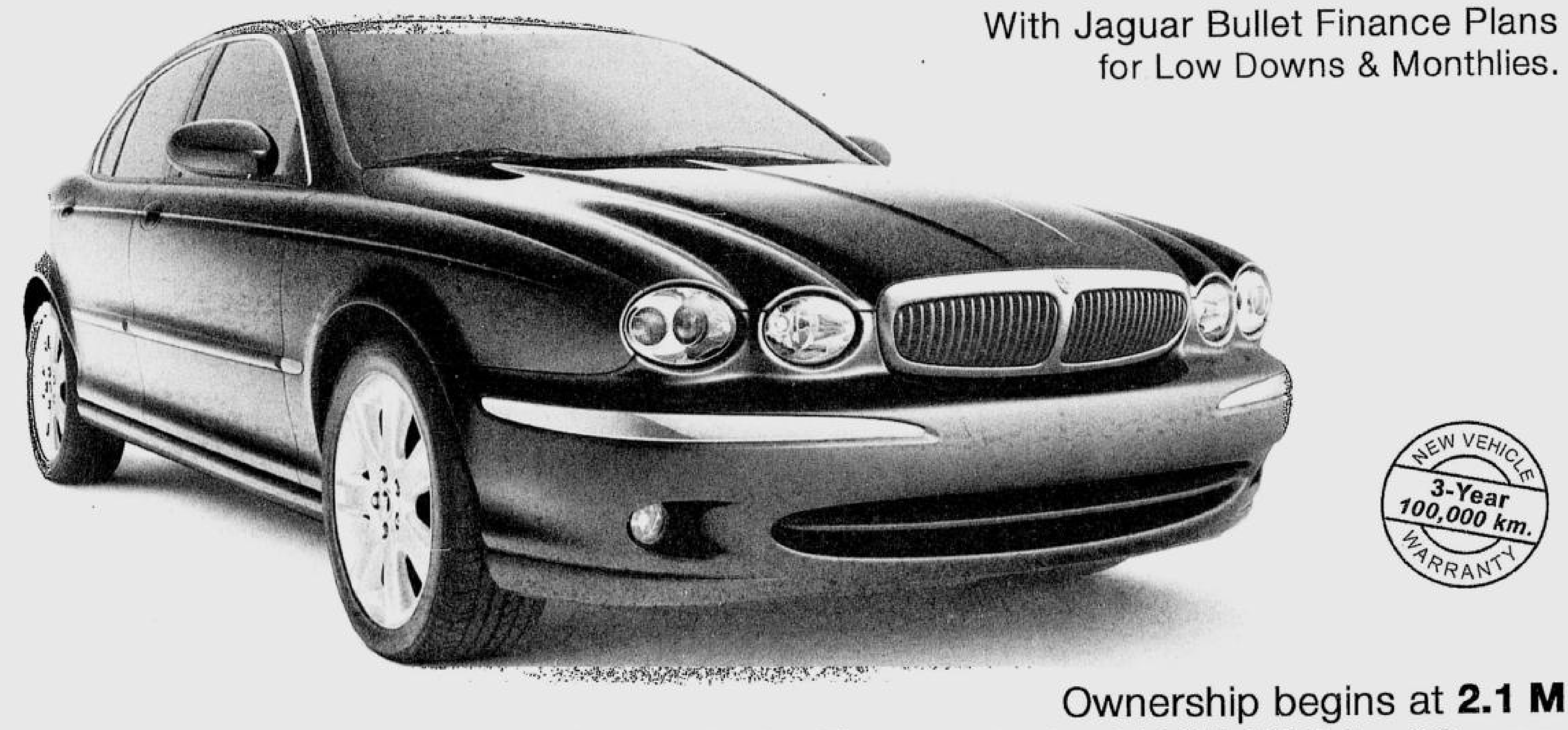

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# The perils of deflation

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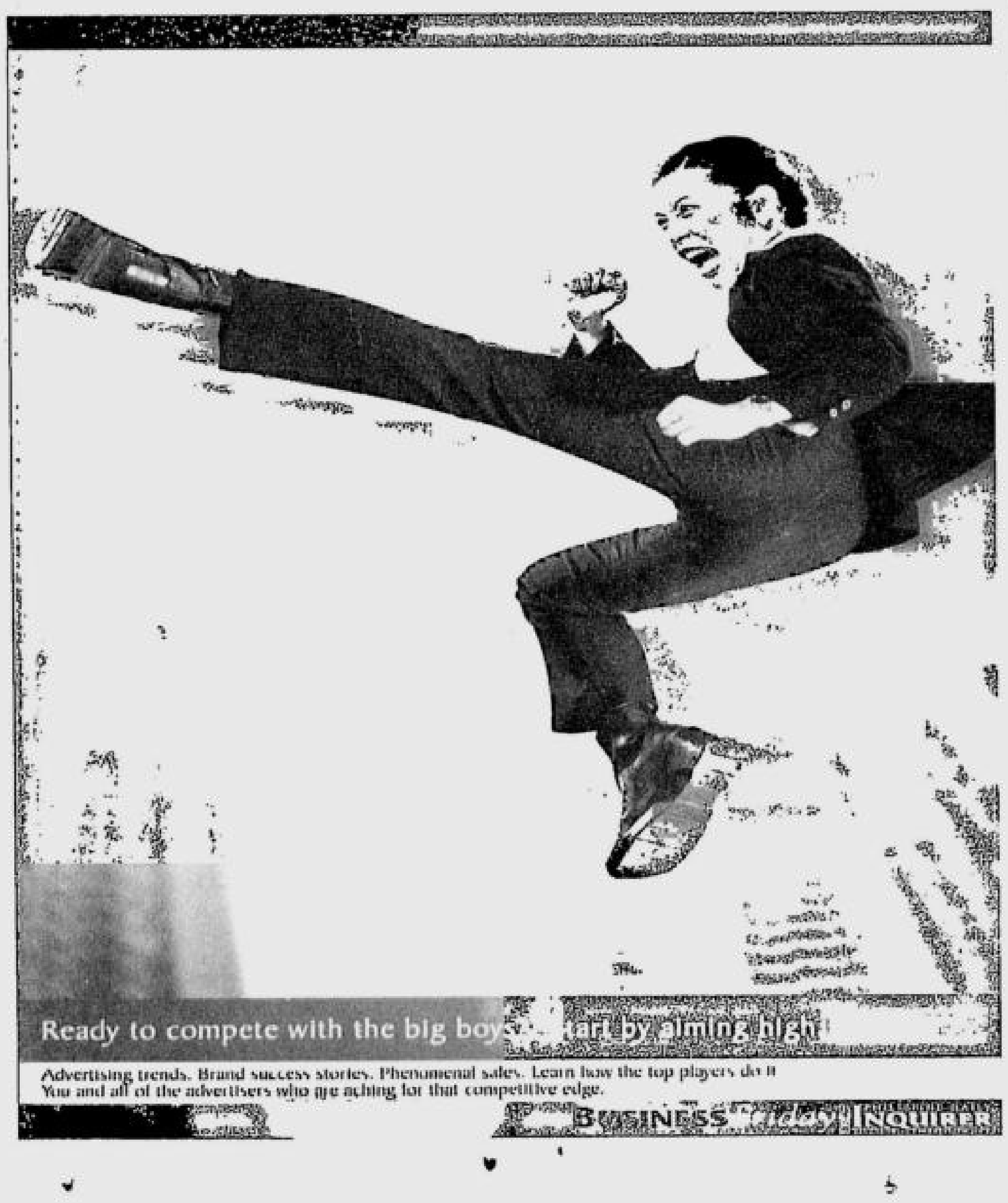
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## MR. BEARBULL

### Ron Nathan

MY DAUGHTER is 6 years old today and she has my zany sense of humor. She graduated from preschool, top in English, bottom in Filipino. I asked her what was Tagalog for Mommy, Daddy and Grandfather, and she immediately replied, "Nanay, Tatay and Popeye." When she saw my wife's false teeth in a jar, she said, "The tooth fairy will never believe this." She is fed up with school, complaining that she can't read or write, and they won't let her talk.

Here is a list of real business names in the Philippines:

Bread Pitt (a bakery)
Maruya Carey (selling *turon* and *maruya*)
Caintacky Chicken (chicken in Cainta)
Mang Donalds (burger joint in Naga)
Miki Mao (a noodle house)
Tapsi Turbi (a *tapa* house)
Goto Heaven (sells *goto*)
Wrap and Roll (*lumpia* outlet)
Let's Goat Together (*kambingan* beer garden)
Isda Best (fish restaurant)
Curl up and dye (beauty parlor)
Petal Attraction (flower shop)
Maid to order (placement agency)
Goldirocks (sand and gravel)
The Way We Wear (boutique)
Doris Day and Night (24-hour eatery)
Candies be Love (candy store)

Last week, I wrote about inflation and deflation. All central banks try to keep inflation at a low level say 2 percent to 3 percent. This is not enough to push up the cost of living by a significant amount and workers have no cause to strike. In some ways, mild inflation is a good thing. If, at 25, you get married and buy a house, when you retire at 65 with your children grown-up, you can move into a smaller place and sell your house at a much higher price. This is guaranteed because if your house has increased in value by 3 percent compounded over 40 years, it will be worth about 4 times what you paid for it, and you will have a nest egg to live on, or spend, at your discretion.

However, if inflation reaches say 10 percent, the cost of living would be seen to be rising and workers would strike to demand higher pay. Some workers would probably be laid off to compensate for any pay rise, and the price of goods and services would increase as companies tried to recover costs. So, in the end, prices would rise and nobody would be any better off. The only effect of a general wage increase is to augment the cost of exports, which makes them less competitive, and tends to cause the currency to depreciate making imports, such as oil, more expensive.

Hyperinflation is usually triggered by a sharp rise in an important commodity, or by devaluation, brought about by a continuous budget imbalance. In the '70s, the Arabs formed Opec, which supplied the majority of the world's oil, and realizing that the price of oil had been kept artificially low, increased it from $4 a barrel to over $30. As this is a vital commodity for non-oil producing countries, this huge rise caused massive inflation worldwide and caused stock markets everywhere to collapse. In England, which is an exceptionally financially stable country, inflation shot up from about 5 percent to 32 percent and its government had to issue a 30-year treasury bond with a coupon of 15-1/2 percent. Two decades earlier, they had been able to issue Treasury stock with a 2-1/2 percent coupon and no definite redemption date. The stock market disintegrated and took years to recover, while inflation subsided slowly.

In Japan, there was a boom in manufacturing activity in the mid-'70s, that led to massive exports that destroyed whole industries in other countries. With huge company profits and export surpluses, the Nikkei rose to 39,700. When, in 1980, the real estate bubble burst, the banks discovered that the vast amounts of money they had lent against property could not be recovered. There were horrendous non-performing loans, so rather than take these losses, they started selling stocks. As the market was extremely overbought, it fell rapidly and kept on falling. The banks had lent vast sums of money against stocks as well, so their situation simply worsened.

As Japanese culture precluded firing workers, who were employed for life, companies were unable to cut costs and the carnage in the stock market went on. After 20 years, the Nikkei hit a recent low of 7,700, down 32,000 points or 80 percent; so much for long-term investing.

As Japanese companies produce far more goods than they can sell in the home market, they tried cutting prices but still they could not stimulate demand. Eventually, there was a spate of bankruptcies, which caused even more selling pressure on the stock market. The central bank cut interest rates to zero, 5

BEARBULL/B4

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| 2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B" | 1,500,000 | 1,250,000 |
| 3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB | 650,000 | 580,000 |
| 4. CANLUBANG GOLF CLUB | 500,000 | 450,000 |
| 5. CAMP JOHN HAY | 230,000 | 200,000 |
| 6. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB | | 120,000 |
| 7. CELEBRITY SPORTS PLAZA | 180,000 | 170,000 |
| 8. CLUB FILIPINO | 150,000 | 130,000 |
| 9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY | 400,000 | 320,000 |
| 10. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A" | 250,000 | 220,000 |
| 11. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.) | 10,200,000 | |
| 12. MANILA POLO CLUB | 2,400,000 | 2,200,000 |
| 13. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF A/B | 500,000/600,000 | 430,000 |
| 14. ORCHARD GOLF CLUB A/B/C | Please call | 165,000 |
| 15. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB | 200,000 | |
| 16. RIVIERA GOLF CLUB A/B/C | Please call | Please call |
| 17. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A" | 1,600,000 | 1,300,000 |
| 18. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS GOLF | 800,000 | 680,000 |
| 19. TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF | 720,000 | 700,000 |
| 20. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB | 150,000 | 135,000 |
| 21. VALLEY GOLF CLUB | 300,000 | 260,000 |
| 22. WACK WACK GOLF CLUB | 8,500,000 | |

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## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, May 19, 2003)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES** | | | | | |
| BANK | | | | | |
| Banco de Oro Univ. Bank | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 43,000 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 34.5 | 34.5 | 34.5 | 34.5 | 121,100 |
| China Banking Corp. | 685 | 685 | 685 | 685 | 320 |
| Citystate Savings Bank | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 2,000 |
| Equitable PCI Bank Inc. | 23.5 | 23.5 | 23.5 | 23.5 | 13,100 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 27.5 | 27.5 | 27 | 27 | 1,600 |
| Philippine National Bank | 23.25 | 23.25 | 23.25 | 23.25 | 128,600 |
| Phil. Savings Bank | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 6,800 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 17.5 | 17.5 | 17.5 | 17.5 | 18,000 |
| **FINANCIAL SERVICE** | | | | | |
| Bankard Inc. | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 425,000 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1430 | 1450 | 1430 | 1450 | 3,960 |
| Sun Life Financial Serv. | 1055 | 1080 | 1055 | 1075 | 3,290 |
| **COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL** | | | | | |
| **COMMUNICATION** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 12 | 12.5 | 12 | 12.5 | 13,300 |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.71 | 0.75 | 0.71 | 0.75 | 3,580,000 |
| Globe Telecom Inc. | 555 | 555 | 530 | 550 | 2,470 |
| Island Info and Tech Inc. | 0.035 | 0.035 | 0.035 | 0.035 | 1,200,000 |
| Pilipino Tel. Corp. | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.31 | 0.31 | 1,820,000 |
| Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.27 | 2,000,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 417.5 | 425 | 417.5 | 425 | 148,930 |
| Philweb Corp. | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 10,700,000 |
| **POWER & ENERGY** | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 6.5 | 6.6 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 242,000 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 9.9 | 10 | 9.9 | 9.9 | 211,000 |
| Petron Corp. | 2.06 | 2.12 | 2.06 | 2.12 | 3,042,000 |
| **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 2 | 2.5 | 2 | 2.5 | 106,000 |
| **CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS** | | | | | |
| Engineering Equip. Inc. | 0.44 | 0.46 | 0.44 | 0.45 | 1,200,000 |
| Phil Nat'l Const. Corp. | 5.2 | 5.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 6,000 |
| **FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| Alaska Milk Corp. | 2.46 | 2.46 | 2.46 | 2.46 | 2,000 |
| Ginebra San Miguel Inc. | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 55,300 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 15.5 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 2,500 |
| RFM Corp. | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 130,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 54.5 | 55 | 54.5 | 55 | 18,600 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 66 | 66 | 65.5 | 66 | 2,100 |
| Universal Robina Corp. | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 150,000 |
| **HOLDING FIRMS** | | | | | |
| Ayala Corp. | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 1,323,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 8,423,000 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 0.026 | 0.026 | 0.026 | 0.026 | 1,200,000 |
| ATN Holdings Inc. | 2.18 | 2.18 | 2.18 | 2.18 | 5,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 0.22 | 0.25 | 0.215 | 0.245 | 11,440,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.16 | 0.19 | 0.16 | 0.19 | 2,690,000 |
| DMCI Holdings Inc. | 0.19 | 0.195 | 0.19 | 0.195 | 2,000,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 8.2 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 8.3 | 341,000 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.08 | 0.1 | 0.08 | 0.1 | 300,000 |
| J.G. Summit Holdings Inc. | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 4,000 |
| Macroasia Corp. | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 80,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 30,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | 0.17 | 0.175 | 0.17 | 0.175 | 670,000 |
| Music Corp. | 0.27 | 0.32 | 0.27 | 0.32 | 940,000 |
| **MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING** | | | | | |
| Interphil Labs Inc. A | 1.92 | 1.92 | 1.92 | 1.92 | 10,000 |
| Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. | 1.72 | 1.82 | 1.72 | 1.8 | 315,000 |
| Philippine Seven Corp. | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 1,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 16.5 | 16.5 | 16.5 | 16.5 | 50,000 |
| **HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE** | | | | | |
| Mondragon Intl Phils Inc. | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 20,000 |
| Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc. | 0.32 | 0.42 | 0.32 | 0.42 | 7,290,000 |
| **BONDS, PREFFERED & WARRANTS** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr) | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 70,900 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series V | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 1,000 |
| PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 1,600 |
| WGA - Preferred | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 4.25 | 6,000 |
| **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 4.9 | 4.95 | 4.9 | 4.95 | 8,047,000 |
| Cityland Development Corp. | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 50,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 250,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.155 | 0.155 | 0.155 | 0.155 | 220,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 5,120,000 |
| Highlands Prime Inc. | 2.12 | 2.12 | 2.12 | 2.12 | 100,000 |
| Kuok Phil. Properties | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 300,000 |
| City & Land Developers | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 41,000 |
| Robinsons Land Corp. | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 3,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 100,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 640,000 |
| **MINING** | | | | | |
| Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A | 0.185 | 0.19 | 0.185 | 0.19 | 450,000 |
| Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B | 0.215 | 0.215 | 0.2 | 0.215 | 610,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.004 | 0.0042 | 0.004 | 0.004 | 23,000,000 |
| Polar Mines & Dev't Corp. | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 2,000,000 |
| **OIL** | | | | | |
| Imperial Res. | 0.012 | 0.014 | 0.012 | 0.014 | 4,100,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.0026 | 0.0026 | 0.0026 | 0.0026 | 1,000,000 |

| | SHARES | VALUE(P) |
|---|---|---|
| Bank & Fin Svc | 766,770 | 18,766,550.00 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 61,843,700 | 118,772,295.00 |
| PRO | 14,871,000 | 47,873,200.00 |
| Mining | 26,060,000 | 338,450.00 |
| OIL | 5,100,000 | 55,200.00 |
| GRAND TOTALS: | 108,641,470 | 185,805,695.00 |

| AVERAGES | | |
|---|---|---|
| Bank & Fin Svc | 352.31 | DOWN 1.56 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 1,572.48 | UP 6.82 |
| PRO | 440.59 | UP 3.24 |
| Mining | 1,186.95 | UP 21.49 |
| OIL | 1.19 | UNCH 0.00 |
| All Shares Index | 692.33 | UP 8.05 |
| Composite | 1,062.94 | UP 3.41 |

NO. OF ADVANCES: 31; NO. OF DECLINES: 15; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 28; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 74; NO. OF TRADES: 1,215

## DISCLOSURES

KEPPEL Philippines Marine Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 11 with record date on May 7.

* * *

PACIFICA Inc. denied having any information that can explain the unusual price movement of its shares that rose from P0.0016 to P0.0024 per share.

* * *

FILINVEST Land Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 6, 9 a.m. at the FCC Marketing Office, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Only stockholders as of May 9 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

EAST Asia Power Resources Corp. clarified that Nadeem Babar's resignation as chair of the company's board of directors was effective Jan. 31, 2003.

* * *

DMCI Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 30 with record date on June 16.

* * *

DIVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. said that OCU Inc. subscribed to 7 million shares of the company for a total amount of P29.4 million. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

## INTEREST RATES

May 19, 2003-MART1 Rates

| Benchmark Interest Rates | MART1 19-May-03 (%) | MART1 16-May-03 (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Month | 7.2269 | 7.1731 |
| 3 Months | 7.2169 | 7.1708 |
| 6 Months | 8.2269 | 8.1942 |
| 1 Year | 8.5846 | 8.6208 |
| 2 Years | 9.2558 | 9.2423 |
| 3 Years | 10.2346 | 10.2442 |
| 4 Years | 10.9173 | 10.9461 |
| 5 Years | 11.2673 | 11.2462 |
| 7 Years | 11.6827 | 11.6846 |
| 10 Years | 11.8923 | 11.9038 |
| 20 Years | 12.8288 | 12.8039 |
| 25 Years | 13.3308 | 13.3519 |

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

# Treasury raises ₱8.25B from sale of 5-year notes

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

THE BUREAU of Treasury said it would limit to P40 billion the size of the three- and five-year retail bonds to be issued next month following the successful sale of five-year promissory notes yesterday that raised P8.25 billion for the government.

The auction committee led by the Treasury offered for sale only P3.5 billion worth of five-year notes but decided to accept P8.25 billion of the P8.75 billion worth of tenders.

Unlike regular bonds that are usually booked as investments, promissory notes or debt papers can be counted as loans and be used to reduce a bank's non-performing loans ratio. Sold to only 19 lenders, the buyers of the bonds were exempt from the 20-percent withholding tax.

Yesterday's five-year notes carried a coupon rate of 10.125 percent, a rate substantially lower than the 11.375 percent a month ago when the government sold about P5.7 billion worth of three- and five-year debt papers.

Deputy Treasurer Mina Figueroa said that demand for the promissory notes pushed down the rate. "We decided to accept a higher volume because the bids were encouraging."

With the higher-than-expected proceeds from the promissory notes, the government said it could cap the volume of the retail treasury bonds at P40 billion instead of accommodating the market's offers that reached P63 billion last year.

Figueroa said the plan to cap RTBs was in line with the government's debt management strategy. She said the bonds would be issued in June but the process of book-building or taking orders might start this month.

If demand for the retail bonds would exceed P40 billion, then the Treasury could just issue another batch. "We would like to avoid a bunching of the maturities," she noted.

The plan to cap the size of the RTBs may affect an earlier plan of the Treasury to cancel regular bond auctions starting November if the proceeds from the retail bonds would reach P60 billion.

The government had sold more than P100 billion worth of retail bonds since May 2001

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CEBU 262-32-39
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- Monitor daily routines and employee behavior
- Increase production, prevent wastage
- Monitor your cash register
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- Prevent and deter criminal activity
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CAUTION ON WATER BOTTLES

BE CAREFUL WHEN BUYING five-gallon plastic water bottles, as they may be poisonous. The caution has been issued recently by the Consumers Association of Subang and Shah Alam, Selangor (CASSA) president and legal adviser Jacob George.

"We have received many complaints from local consumers as well as our network partners in Taiwan that a large quantity of plastic water bottles imported from China are made from toxic materials," said George.

"We believe that bottles are made out of plastic materials that contain ethylene glycols which can produce glyoxal through oxidation. Glyoxal is harmful to human blood, liver and lungs, and may cause cancer," he added.

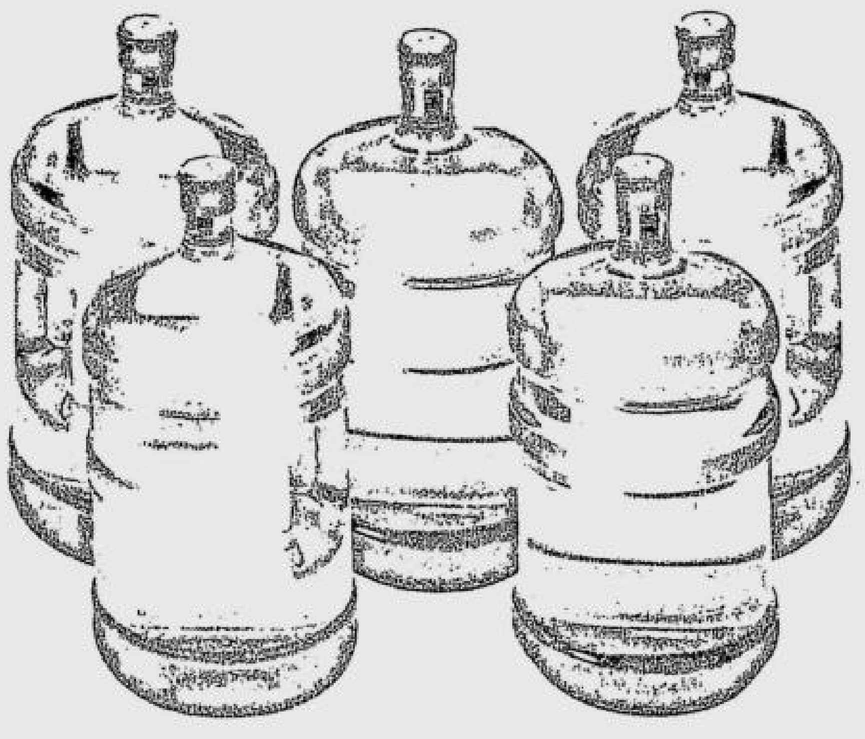
"I compared several imitation water bottles with the genuine one and found that the former do not bear the manufacturer's names. They are also not as durable as the genuine one," he said.

"We are concerned that their usage and distribution may threaten the image and credibility of local manufacturers who produce high quality water bottles since consumers may not able to distinguish between the fake imported products and local ones," he said.

I am trying to get the ministries of Health and Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs to look into the matter. Comprehensive investigation must be undertaken and action taken against the importers of these water bottles to prevent Malaysia from becoming a dumping ground for hazardous products."

SOURCE: NEW STRAITS TIMES (City Life)
FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2003
MALAYSIA

USE Only Water Bottles Made with FDA-Compliant Plastics
Clover Plastics 5-gallon water bottles are made with virgin-grade (not recycled) Lexan® Polycarbonate resins from General Electric Co.,USA



*SAFE: made with FDA-compliant resins *DURABLE: high impact strength
*EXCELLENT CLARITY & TRANSPARENCY *VALUE FOR MONEY: last longer
MANUFACTURED BY Clover Plastics
For Your Protection Read the Label at the Bottom
Genuine Clover Plastics water bottles have the embossed "Clover Plastics"
CLOVER
CLOVER PLASTICS PHILS.,INC.
Lot 51 Phase II-A Carmelray Industrial Park, Canlubang, Laguna
Tel. No. (049) 549-18-24 Fax No. (049) 549-18-26
E-mail: cloverph@mozcom.com

PNB Tele-Ugnayan
RAPID CONNECT SA MIDDLE EAST

Photos courtesy of OWWA

Bringing out the Best of the *Bayanihan* Spirit

In the face of great uncertainty of the war in Iraq, PNB partnered with the country's telecommunications providers and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) in response to the war-preparedness initiative of Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

**PNB Tele-Ugnayan Centers** were set up in OWWA offices across the country and affected areas in the Middle East. Over 3,500 families and OFWs got connected to their loved ones using a combination of traditional landline and state-of-the-art Internet video conferencing facility, and mobile phones.

To our service partners, particularly, OWWA, Globe Handyphone, Touch Mobile and PLDT, it was indeed a pleasure working with you.

Sa lahat ng mga tumulong na makapaglingkod sa ating mga kababayan na naapektuhan ng digmaan sa Iraq, maraming-maraming salamat po!

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# Bank lending grew in March but at slower pace

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

GROWTH in bank lending has slowed to 3.2 percent in March from the previous year's rate to register total loans of P1.46 trillion during the period.

On a monthly basis, the banking sector managed to sustain loan increases for the seventh straight month in March.

The highest growth in bank lending this year was recorded in February at 4.4 percent.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said the sustained growth in bank lending could be traced to the improvements in farm sector lending. Loans extended to the agriculture sector grew by 40.3 percent in March. Loans to wholesale and retail trade grew by 13.3 percent and to utilities, 12 percent.

Loans to the manufacturing sector expanded for the fourth consecutive month by 7.3 percent year-on-year after 17 straight months of decline.

The community, social and personal services registered a slower growth of 6.6 percent in March against a year-on-year increase of 18.2 percent in February. These sectors accounted for 64.6 percent of the total outstanding loans of commercial banks as of end-March, according to the central bank.

"The growth in bank lending, particularly in the manufacturing sector is supported by encouraging improvements in domestic demand: the 12.1 percent rise in the volume of production index and the 2.7 percent expansion in the value of production index in January," said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura in a statement.

The average capacity utilization of the manufacturing sector also improved to 76.5 percent in February from 76.1 percent a month ago.

"The favorable developments in domestic demand, combined with the stability of the exchange rate and the lowering of oil prices, could help boost consumer and business sentiment further. These factors could propel a sustained recovery in bank lending," added Buenaventura.

He also credited for the increased lending the substantial decline in lending rates following the Monetary Board's decision to bring down its key overnight rates.

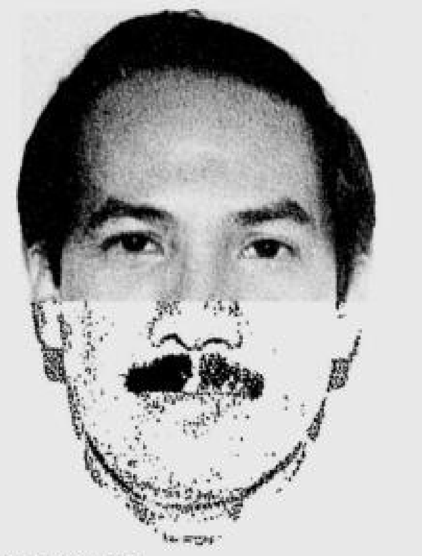
As bank lending increases, the ratio of bad loans to the total portfolio tends to shrink. In March, however, non-performing loans went up anew to 15.5 percent from 15.08 percent in February.

## FRAUD OR MERE ERROR

# 'Healthy skepticism' seen key to accurate audits

**By Tina Arceo-Dumlao**

*(Second of a series)*



BALANGUE

ISLA

FINANCIAL statements are considered the best source of information to analyze not only a company's profit or loss, but also the extent of its assets and liabilities and the projects that it is undertaking.

These information are used by investment bankers, analysts and ordinary investors to determine whether they should buy the company's stock, extend a loan for its operations or even predict if the company is going bankrupt.

Many bankers, investors and stockholders, however, were burned badly over the past few years when the companies they thought were financially healthy turned out to be hiding dreaded diseases. And many are pinning the blame on the corporate auditors who, they claim, should have spotted the symptoms and informed investors through their certification of the financial statements.

Enron Corp., for instance, was found to have used special purpose companies to hide $8.5 billion worth of deals and the magnitude of its debts.

Its bankruptcy sucked in not only its auditor—Arthur Andersen—but the entire accounting industry. Worse, it damaged the image of corporate America.

**SPECIAL REPORT**

### RP experience

In the months that followed the breakout of the Enron accounting scandal in 2001, the US Securities and Exchange Commission launched investigations of the financial reporting practices of top corporations. The probe uncovered a veritable can of worms.

One of the biggest casualties was telecommunications firm WorldCom, which disclosed that it misreported $3.9 billion in expenses to inflate profits, eventually leading to its bankruptcy—the biggest in US history.

Other reputable companies were also found to have inflated profits, such as Global Crossing, Xerox Corp., KMart, Vivendi Universal, Halliburton and AOL Time Warner. Investigations are under way to determine if their auditors played a role in hiding the true picture of their financial condition.

The Philippines predated the Enron scandal by a few years when, for the first time in its long history, SGV & Co., the country's largest auditing firm, withdrew its audit report on sugar milling firm Victorias Milling Corp. It claimed that Victorias Milling's management had given it fraudulent documents, thus, providing the wrong basis for its audit reports.

The report, however, was withdrawn only after Victorias Milling ran to the SEC for debt relief saying it would be unable to pay as much as P6.5 billion in obligations to 32 creditor banks. That rocked the entire banking industry to its foundation.

SGV was severely criticized for allegedly failing to disclose the extent of the company's debt problems and earned a censure from the Philippine Association of Certified Public Accountants.

SGV was again criticized when Ramcar Inc., the largest integrated manufacturer of automotive batteries in Southeast Asia, sought debt relief in 2001.

Ramcar's audited financial statements showed loans of only P4.5 billion but later studies showed that the company actually had over P8 billion in debts to some 19 banks, which it could no longer pay off.

### No detectives

It is very easy to make the auditors the scapegoat in these financial shenanigans, but auditors are not detectives. Their primary responsibility is to make sure that the financial statements comply with the generally accepted accounting principles, which are supposed to prove that financial transactions that have bearing on the bottom line are above board.

David Balangue, vice chair of SGV and Co., told the INQUIRER in an interview that an auditor was looking into a company's financial performance not necessarily to discover fraud or errors, but to determine if the financial statements were properly crafted and if they complied with auditing standards.

Fraud is defined by accounting standards as "intentional misrepresentations of financial information by one or more individuals among management, employees or outside parties."

Fraud may involve the following: falsification, manipulation or alteration of documents; misappropriation of assets, and intentional misapplication of accounting policies.

Fraud is differentiated from "error" in that errors are "unintentional" mistakes in providing financial information such as: oversight or misinterpretation of factors or mistakes in the application of accounting policies.

Balangue stressed that it was the responsibility of a company's management—not the auditor—to prevent and detect fraud and errors through the implementation of an adequate system of internal controls.

According to Balangue, auditors do not go through the entire gamut of transactions that the company did for the year being audited. They just take sample transactions and information provided by management before issuing an opinion on the financial statements. Unless an examination reveals evidence to the contrary, the auditor then goes about its report on the assumption that the documents and evidence of transaction provided to it are truthful and genuine.

### Limitations

This was why when SGV & Co. discovered that the management of Victorias Milling gave it fraudulent inventory documents that in effect, inflated profits, it had to withdraw the report.

He stressed that there were inherent limitations to an audit, thus, it was possible for the auditor to miss out on transactions that could have an impact on the financial statements.

According to the Auditing Standards of the Philippines, "the subsequent discovery of material misstatement of the financial information resulting from fraud or error existing during the period covered by the auditor's report does not, in itself, indicate that the auditor had failed to adhere to generally accepted auditing standards."

It was Jerry Isla, chair of Joaquin Cunanan and Co., who said that auditors were not detectives. He, however, added that they should go about their audit with "healthy skepticism."

This attitude, Isla explained, would allow the auditing staff to look into transactions more closely and come up with an accurate audit opinion.

*(To be continued)*

# Gov't expected to oppose Senate auto tax proposal

**By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.**

THE GOVERNMENT is cool to a proposal in the Senate seeking an increase in the floor of the tax base on vehicles from P500,000 to P750,000 as a trade-off for the approval of the pending automotive tax reform bill.

Board of Investments Managing Head Gregory L. Domingo said the move would lead to a substantial reduction in the projected tax collection from the new automotive excise taxes.

"The government would suffer a net loss from a higher (tax) floor and I'm sure the Department of Finance would also oppose a higher price base," Domingo said.

The BOI and the DOF had endorsed a draft bill seeking to impose a 3-percent tax on vehicles below P500,000. Vehicles worth between P500,000 and P1 million have to pay an excise tax of P15,000 plus 15 percent of the value in excess of P500,000.

The DOF is projecting to boost its collection of automotive taxes by P1.14 billion a year as Asian utility vehicles, vans and sport-utility vehicles (which were currently tax exempt because they have more than 9 seats) start paying taxes. The automotive industry generated P2.5 billion taxes largely from passenger cars that accounted for 30 percent of total unit sales during the same period.

Some Senators have proposed to increase the minimum tax base from P500,000 to P750,000 to ensure that all AUVs (which the lawmakers want to be developed for exports because of their high local content) would be charged the minimum rate of 3 percent.

The Automotive Industry Workers Alliance has backed the Senate's move to protect the AUV.

In tandem with the increase in the minimum price, the Senate is also looking into a proposal to retain the tax on luxury vehicles at 100 percent instead of the 50 percent proposed by the DOF and BOI for vehicles worth more than P2 million.

Domingo said that a higher tax on luxury vehicles would not compensate for the foregone revenues arising from the adjustments in the floor price. Domingo said that a high tax rate on luxury vehicles would only encourage traders to smuggle their premium branded vehicles in the country.

The Senate is expected to pass the new excise tax bill for vehicles before Congress goes on recess on June 6.

# RP sees no ratings downgrade

MOODY'S Investors Service has assured the Philippine government that it has no plan to downgrade the country's sovereign ratings.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said he had met with one of the sovereign analysts of Moody's while in Washington and he was assured that no downgrade was forthcoming. This, he said, was because of the improving fiscal performance reported by the government.

"I presented to Moody's the latest fiscal numbers and they are pleased with what they heard," said the finance chief.

A downgrade in the ratings pushes the cost of the government's borrowings.

In January, Moody's downgraded its outlook on the Philippines' local currency rating to negative but retained a stable outlook on the country's foreign currency rating following an annual visit in December 2002. It rates the Philippine sovereign debt at Ba1, a notch lower than investment grade.

Early this month, Fitch Ratings sent a team to review the country's performance and said the results of the visit would be announced in June.

Paul Rawkins, senior director of Fitch's Sovereign and International Public Finance, said the improving tax and tariff collections were positive factors that would be seriously considered by his group in deciding what to do with the country's ratings.

Fitch had downgraded its outlook on the Philippines' foreign credit last November, weeks after S&P did the same. Standard & Poor's downgraded last month to BB from BB plus its rating on the Philippines.

The Fitch official said a negative outlook on the Philippines' credit pointed to a possible downgrade of the rating as it worried over the impact of the 2004 elections on the sustainability of the economic gains. *Clarissa S. Batino*

# The perils of deflation

From page B2

years ago, and there were budget stimuli about twice a year, but to no avail. Economic decline had gone too far to be halted and Japan was in a deflationary spiral, a 12-year recession, which it has yet to get out of.

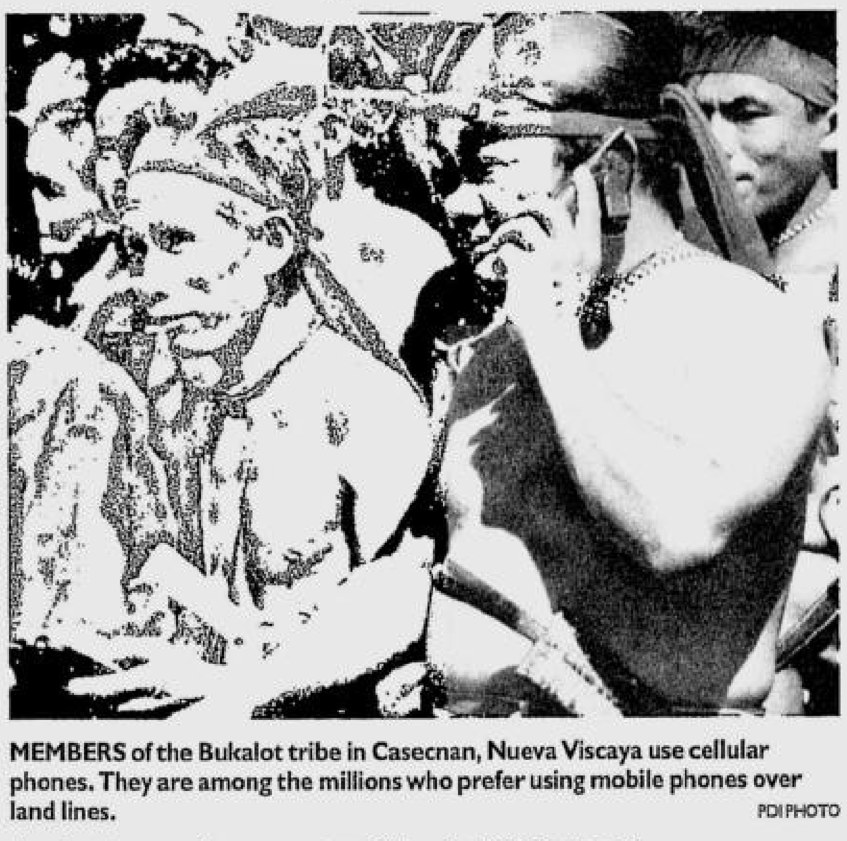
Deflation causes companies to cut prices, which reduces profit margins, which leads to further layoffs, which reduces consumer spending, which causes lower prices, and so the cycle goes on an on and is very difficult to stop. Deflation is an insidious disease more deadly than SARS. It results from falling prices of consumer goods and assets, mounting fiscal deficits, a private sector overwhelmed by huge irrecoverable loans, and a lack of strong leadership with frequent changes of prime minister. The current popular prime minister has yet to tackle the bank's massive non-performing loans, let the weak companies go bankrupt, and take over others through mergers or nationalization, thereby shedding labor.

Although China is not yet a major threat, as they do not produce the same products, the writing is on the wall. Eventually, China will expand its product range, upgrade its quality, and compete directly with Japan. If Japan does not take action now, they might stay in the deflationary spiral for another 12 years. Their 5-year note yields 0.18 percent and their 10-year note 0.58 percent.

The United States also has a huge trade deficit, several bankruptcies of major companies, some by fraud, an overbought market in 2000 and a major competitor in China. But it has strong leadership, the best economic team in the world, and no compunction in firing 2,100,000 workers, 525,000 in the past 3 months. Economic growth is down to 1.6 percent and there are no definite signs of recovery even though the war in Iraq is over. Alan Greenspan admits that the situation could go either way, but I believe that modest growth will be achieved and deflation avoided. Otherwise, there will be a global recession. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

# Telecom companies generate more business from mobile phone services

**By Abigail L. Ho**



MEMBERS of the Bukalot tribe in Casecnan, Nueva Viscaya use cellular phones. They are among the millions who prefer using mobile phones over land lines. PDI PHOTO

FILIPINOS are spending twice as much on cellular phone calls and services than on land lines these days, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan said industry figures for the first quarter showed precisely this, with PLDT subsidiary Smart Communications Inc. raking in P10.7 billion in revenues and rival firm Globe Telecom Inc. posting P10.6 billion from cellular services.

These revenue figures combined made for a P21.3-billion cellular service industry for the first three months of the year.

Smart's net income was placed at P2.8 billion while that of Globe was at P2 billion.

While revenues from PLDT's landline business was slightly higher at P11.3 billion, its net income was way below than that of Smart at only P188 million.

Globe's wireline business, for its part, brought in around P1.2 billion in revenues.

Summing these land line revenues up, PLDT's and Globe's earnings from the business were placed at around P12.5 billion, almost 100 percent lower than that of the cellular service market in the first quarter.

Judging from these revenue trends and the subscriber base growth in the past quarter, Pangilinan expressed confidence that the country's cellular subscriber base was likely to continue growing even if it hit a penetration rate of 25 percent.

"We should be able to stretch this to a number higher than 25 percent. Indications include net subscriber additions that were similar to those in the last two or three quarters. We should reach close to 25-percent penetration rate by the end of the year," he said.

With this potential room for growth, the entry of new player Digitel Mobile Phil. Inc. into the cellular phone market is not expected to pose any serious threat to big players Globe and Smart.

"The whole industry is actually growing. The (National Capital Region) is already well penetrated but not saturated yet. We're not really threatened by the entry of (Digitel's) Sun Cellular as there was no indication yet that Sun is cannibalizing on our market," Globe senior vice president Gil Genio said.

He added that Globe had always been consistent with its moves to maintain its growth trend, with or without new competition.

While the NCR might soon reach a point of saturation, Genio pointed out that areas outside Metro Manila still has a huge growth potential.

Globe is now focusing more on provincial rollouts to further improve its position in the mobile phone market.

Genio said strong provincial markets included Central Luzon and parts of Western Visayas where many overseas Filipino workers hailed from.

# People, Events & Products

**E-mail:** pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
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*Editor* **Aries Espinosa**

## Buy N Text celebrates with its new millionaires

BUY N Text winners pose with officers of Buy N Text Corp. and Smart Communications.

BUY N TEXT hosted a bash with business partners, associates, and the media in honor of the country's new millionaires courtesy of Buy N Text raffle promo. Hundreds of guests crammed the Dish at the Powerplant Mall in Makati City to join in the celebration.

Boy Abunda, host of top-rated shows The Buzz and Private Conversations, was master of the ceremonies of the spectacular evening. Unleashing his inimitable style, Boy got both the honorees and guests involved during the whole program.

The Whiplash dancers, rising boy band Aka Fellas, After Eve, and Blue Note Funk provided the entertainment which spiced-up the event that lasted until the late hours of the night.

The festivities started with an audio-visual presentation followed by a 'private conversation' between Boy Abunda and Buy N Text's head honchos - chief executive officer Roy Barin, and chief operating officer Arthur Policarpio, and chief information officer Jeremy Obial. They talked about particulars of the promotion, the vision behind its development, and, thanks to Boy's prodding, their personal lives.

It was then the winners' turn at the spotlight. They came from all over the country to celebrates their good fortunes. They shared, sometimes tearfully, their experiences and feelings when they found out they had won P1 million.

BOY Abunda with the twelve Buy N Text millionaires present at the Dish celebration.

The Buy N Text millionaires were led by Joseph Dendiego, the first winner who hails from Lingayen, Pangasinan. He is also the only male winner of the promotion. Other winners at the gala were Marie Antoniette Ogardo (Marikina), Glaiza Leuterio (Tondo, Manila), Aniceta Gaerlan (Quezon City), Doreen Salalila (Quezon City), Charity Agbayani (Parañaque), Marwen Edralin (Misamis Occidental), Cynthia Lorenz (Parañaque), Arlene Alvarado (Cavite), Cheryl Cubacub (Negros Oriental), Aurora Bonaobra (Marikina), and Corazon Cuales (Malabon).

Party-goers experienced the technology behind the Buy N Text promotion as the organizers held a text raffle specially for them. Using special BNT codes distributed during the party, lucky guests won gift certificates from David's Salon, P10,000 in cash, and a Nokia 6610 mobile phone. They also got the chance to join the Buy N Text raffles to win P1 million. They also took home gift packs courtesy of Buy N Text and their trade partners.

AWARDS NIGHT

**TWO ANVILS AND THREE GOLD QUILLS FOR PETRON**

Petron Corporation garnered a total of five major awards in the recently concluded 38th Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) and the 2003 Philippine Gold Quill Awards of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). PRSP honored Petron's National Student Art Competition, ArtPetron, with two Anvil Awards of Excellence in the Tools of Public Relations Category. Recognized as outstanding communication tools that effectively implement PR programs are the Petron 2002 Wall Calendar and the ArtPetron II Collateral. Petron continued its winning streak when three of its initiatives merited two Gold Quill Awards of Excellence and Award of Merit from IABC. Petron Foundation's Tulong Aral ng Petron and the Petron Foundation Website received two Excellence Awards while the 2003 Petron Kid's Summer Camp entry garnered an Award of Merit. Photo taken during the 2003 Gold Quill Award (from left): IABC president Ramon Osorio Jr.; former IABC president Roni Tapia-Merk; Petron HRM manager Cristina Menorca; Petron Foundation project officer Allan Victorino; Petron VP for corporate planning Ziyad Al-Shiha; ABS-CBN's Ces Oreña-Drilon; and former Press Secretary Rodolfo Reyes.

**REGINE AT GILIGAN'S**

Last April 21, a surprise party was given by Viva Films to Regine Velasquez (3rd from right) at Giligan's Island, Festival Mall. With her is owner Jong Alquiros and daughters, Nicole and Natasha.

**PHILAM PLANS CELEBRATES 14TH ANNIVERSARY**

Philam Plans recently marked its 14th anniversary celebrations with an awarding ceremony for its loyal and dedicated employees. In photo with president and CEO Jesus G. Hofileña, FLMI, LLIF, and operations senior vice president Reynaldo Gatcheco Jr. (extreme left and extreme right, respectively) are the company's 5-year service awardees: (from left, 1st row) Francis Joseph Littaua, Melody Lim, Melissa Eduarte, Juanita Enorme, Rowena Alfonso; (from left, 2nd row) Frederick Ilon, Gilbert Gonzales, Christopher Bunoan, Rico Bautista and Antonio de Guzman.

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**PFIZER TEAMS UP WITH PADE**

With the alarming increase in the number of diabetics in the country, Pfizer Inc. and the Philippine Association of Diabetes Educators (Pade) decided to team up and develop the Pade-Pfizer Diabetes-Friendly School Project, an initiative that aims to provide proper diabetes education that will help Filipino diabetics live full and productive lives. To seal the partnership, a memorandum of agreement was recently signed by Rey Gerardo E. Bacarro, president and country manager of Pfizer Inc.; and Dr. Elizabeth Ann Fernando-Catindig, president of Pade at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. Present during the MOA signing were Dr. Josefina Tuazon, Pade vice president and project coordinator; Dr. Anthony C. Leachon, Pfizer's medical director; Dr. Ricardo E. Fernando, chair of the Institute for Studies on Diabetes Foundation (ISDF) and Pateros Mayor Rosendo T. Capco (shown in photo), who gave an acceptance speech on behalf of Pateros, the project's pilot area.

## Informatics offers new 3-year degree course

INFORMATICS University Belt now offers a three-year Bachelor of Science in Computer Science (BSCS) program, currently Asia's most updated BSCS curriculum, which includes the latest Oracle and Sun Java technologies.

The BSCS is a trimester program, which begins with a UK-based specialized ADCS (Advanced Diploma in Computer Studies) curriculum combined with the holistic approach of Liberal Arts education.

"Informatics in Ubelt is the only institution that offers the three-year BSCS program accredited by the Commission on Higher Education (Ched)," according to Charlyne Santos, assistant director for academics at Informatics Philippines.

The top-up program allows graduates of ADCS to take their final year of BSCS online through PurpleTrain.com (i.e., eBSCS) or in a classroom setting through Informatics - University Belt center and Informatics International College.

Because Informatics follows the British education system, students, upon finishing their first year (diploma level) may be employed as programmers, web developers and systems / network officers; while students who complete their second year (advanced diploma level) may be employed as systems analysts, systems developers, multimedia developers and web masters. The system enables Informatics students to start earning money sooner than their peers.

BSCS is validated and awarded by the Informatics Academy (IA) in Singapore. IA continuously ensures the high academic standards of the Informatics organization across all centers and all countries. IA is represented by academics from various international universities and other institutions of higher learning.

Informatics, established in Singapore in 1983, has more than 200,000 graduates in the Philippines. It is the undisputed leader in IT training for children and youth, professionals and business / community leaders, and is the recognized IT systems integrator of top universities and private corporations nationwide. Informatics Ubelt is one of 45 centers nationwide.

For more information, visit www.informatics.edu.ph or call 727-0401 to 06.

**CCP IS CUSA'S 5-PEAT OVER-ALL CHAMPION**

The Central Colleges of the Philippines (CCP) once more bagged the overall championship for the fifth consecutive time at the recently concluded Colleges and Universities Sports Association (Cusa) meet. The closing ceremony of the 8th season of Cusa, attended by over 200 awardees from different schools, was held last April 10 at the CCP Qaudrangle. This year, host school CCP won the championship for the main events: the men's volleyball, and men and women's table tennis. Photo shows the awarding ceremony where CCP VP for academic affairs Dra. Elena Reyes receives the trophy handed over by Jimmy Alapag, Harvey Carey and Bong Ravena of Talk N' Text, who graced the event.

## Training in sustainable health programs for poor communities

MEDICAL missions may do more harm than good and sustainable health programs are a much better way to help poor communities. A training seminar featuring medical and rural health experts on this subject will be held by the League of Corporate Foundations on Friday, May 23, at the Petron MegaPlaza on Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

The seminar, "Doing Good and Keeping People Well", the third in a series of LCF-led training seminars, will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and is open to all companies, organizations, and foundations interested in financially sustainable and effective community health programs.

Registration fee (to cover meals and lecture materials) is P1,500. Seats are limited so confirm your attendance early by calling the LCF Secretariat at numbers 892-9084 or 892-9189.

Practical tips on the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Sars), company and Department of Health partnerships on promoting community health, and other related topics will be discussed by noted medical and social development professionals. Speakers include: WHO regional adviser for health promotions Dr. Susan Mercado for communicating important health messages to the society; UP-PGH director Dr. Juan Pablo Nañagas, on how NGOs can work effectively with hospitals and a study on the advantages and disadvantages of medical missions; Zuellig Foundation executive director Dr. Kenneth Y. Hartigan-Go for benchmarks of effective medical missions; director of the DOH-National Epidemiology Center Dr. Consorcia Lim-Quizon for updates on the Sars epidemic; Dr. Marife Yap of the Ateneo Graduate School of Business, on changing the model of community health investment; and Give-A-Life Foundation's Dr. Philip Cruz for the changing health situation in the country and how NGOs can play a more effective role in various health programs.

## Bits Clips

### The Columns at the Manual launch

THE COLUMNS, Ayala Avenue, a residential condominium complex on Ayala and Sen. Gil Puyat (Buendia) avenues, will be among the featured projects during the launch of the Manual Magazine at the NBC Tent on May 21. The Columns, is a project of the Community Innovations Inc., an Ayala Land subsidiary, which fulfills the aspirations of young urban achievers for affordable, quality residential development in the Makati central business district. More details available at www.communityinnovations.com.ph.

### Catering seminar set

PROACTIVE Center for Training (Pact), presents its summer edition of the 'Managing a Catering Business Seminar - Workshop' on May 21 to 30, 2:00 to 6:00 p.m., at Sari-Sari Cafeteria, Eastwood City Walk, Eastwood City, Libis, QC. The workshop is open to those who are planning to open a catering business. The eight-day training will feature lectures and hands-on workshops on legal requirements; planning the menu, equipment and staffing; cost control; room arrangements; napkin folding and table skirting among others. Reservations are currently being accepted on a first-come-first-served basis at tel. no. 787-6370 or 0916-822-6053. Only twenty participants will be accepted. Seminar fee is P4,500 per participant inclusive of materials and handouts, workshop manual, snacks, field trip to food and equipment suppliers, and a certificate of completion.

## ProductFILES

### *Sterling notebooks*

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2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 8966633/30

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## VACANT POSITIONS FOR PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT

### INVESTMENTS SPECIALIST

**Item No. BOIB-IMENTS-4-1998 (103-2)**
**Electronics & ICT Department**
**Salary Grade 15 + allowances**

- Bachelor's Degree in Economics, Electronics Engineering, Business Management and other related courses
- Preferably with relevant work experience of at least one (1) year. Experience in project management is a plus
- With excellent oral and written communication skills

### INVESTMENTS SPECIALIST

**Item No. BOIB-IMENTS-69-1998 (347)**
**Electronics & ICT Department**
**Salary Grade 15 + allowances**

- Graduate of Business Administration, Economics or Developmental Studies
- Work experience related to IT Services Project Management
- With excellent oral and written communication skills

### HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OFFICER II

**Item No. BOIB-HRMO2-1-1998 (59)**
**Administration Department**
**Salary Grade 15 + allowances**

- BS Psychology/Behavioral Science
- Must have at least three (3) years of comprehensive work experience in the administration and evaluation of psychological exams and in-depth interview
- Should possess a very good command of oral & written English communications
- CS Professional/2nd Level Eligibility

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:**
**3 June 2003**
**Applications are accepted**
**only during Tuesdays & Fridays**
**(9am – 12nn & 1pm – 5pm)**
**Human Resource Division,**
**Administration Department**

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Republika ng Pilipinas
**KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN**
Department of Justice
Manila

30 April 2003

**DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR NO. 33**

TO : ALL CONCERNED
SUBJECT : INCREASE IN AND COLLECTION OF FILING FEES TO COVER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS FOR SERVICES RENDERED IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROCESSING OF:

(1) APPLICATION FOR ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL NON-IMMIGRANT VISA, OR FOR CHANGE OF ADMISSION STATUS TO, OR FOR EXTENSION OF STAY AS, SPECIAL NON-IMMIGRANT UNDER SECTION 47(a)(2) OF THE PHILIPPINE IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1940, AS AMENDED.

(2) REQUEST FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APPROVED CHANGE OF ADMISSION STATUS FROM TEMPORARY VISITOR/S TO SPECIAL NON-IMMIGRANT/S UNDER SECTION 47(a)(2) OF THE AFORESAID IMMIGRATION ACT;

(3) REQUEST FOR REVALIDATION OF THE APPROVED SPECIAL NON-IMMIGRANT VISA/S;

(4) APPLICATION/REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY TO EMPLOY OR TO EXTEND THE EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN TECHNICIANS IN A WHOLLY OR PARTIALLY NATIONALIZED TRADE, BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY UNDER SECTION 2-A OF COMMONWEALTH ACT NO. 108, AS AMENDED BY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 715; AND

(5) APPEAL ON TAX ORDINANCES/REVENUE MEASURES UNDER SECTION 187 OF R.A. NO. 7160 (LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991).

In addition to the documentary requirements prescribed by Office Circular No. 32 dated November 18, 1980 and Office Circular No. 1 dated February 12, 1981 *(Prescribing the procedures for the processing of applications for issuance of special non-immigrant visas, or for change of admission status to, or for extension of stay as, special non-immigrants under Section 47(a)(2) of the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940, as amended)* and Ministry Order No. 21 dated December 1, 1980 *(amending Office Circular dated May 28, 1976, prescribing the procedures for the processing of applications for authority to employ foreign technicians in wholly or partially nationalized trade, business, industry or undertaking)* there shall be collected and paid to the Cashier's Office of this Department to cover administrative costs for services rendered a Filing Fee of P2,500.00 and a U.P. Legal Research Fee of P25.00 per individual applicant and each member of his/her family accompanying him/her with respect to above items nos. 1,2, and 3 and per applicant individual or entity with respect to items nos. 4 and 5.

This Circular is being issued pursuant to Memorandum Circular No. 121 dated November 2, 1990 and Executive Order No. 197 dated January 13, 2000, both of the Office of the President, directing all departments, bureaus and offices, including government-owned or controlled corporations to revise and increase their fees and charges "at just and reasonable rates sufficient to cover administrative costs" but "not less than twenty (20) percent."

The previous Circulars on the same subject matter are hereby amended insofar as the amount of filing fees to be paid is concerned.

This Circular takes effect immediately.

(Sgd.) **SIMEON A. DATUMANONG**
Secretary

(PDI–May 13 & 20, 2003)

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## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

### CONSTRUNCTION MATERIAL

## GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

### CONSTRUNCTION MATERIAL

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Direct hire Mktg Personnel 18-45 Coll grad/level w/ w/o exp #4370454 Ms. Shie

MKTG STAFF 2568505 GABBY

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### MALE/FEMALE

LAUNDROKING-Dla Rsa Mkt Laundry Staff w/ experience T8420084/09167114150

Mktg Staff 2568505 Gabby

MKTG STF 0920-2442912 Ice

OFC STAFF 09183558648 CHARI

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5271590

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### AUCTION SALE

Stargem Pawnshop 26-A E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave. QC We sell all expired Pledges on June 2, 2003 at 9AM-J. Enriquez Lic. Auctioneer

Unigem Pawnshop 3-E N. Ramirez St. Q.C. We Sell All Expired Pledges on June 2, 2003 at 9AM J. Enriquez Lic. Auctioneer

### LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Juanita Babar was extrajudicially settled by her heirs per Doc. # 534, Page 72, Book I, Series 2003 of Notary Public Renen Rivera of Paranaque (PDI-May 20, 27&June 3,2003)

### PERSONAL

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I JUST MISS YOU SO MUCH
I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH...
I NEED YOU!!!
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## SANTIAGO ADANTE CAMARA

**of Atimonan, Quezon**

July 25, 1920 – May 17, 2003

His loving wife **PACITA**; children **DITO** & **EMMA**; **BOY** & **DETTE**; **NILO** & **CHARRY**; brothers and sisters **MANUEL** & **MERCEDES**; **ANTONIO** (†); **JUANITA** & **GUILLERMO** (†); **AMADA** & **AGUINALDO** (†); **NIEVES** & **VICENTE**; grandchildren **JOSEPH**; **JEROME**; **EUMIR**; **PAOLO**; **KOSHO**; **TINO**; **PEARL**; **HONEY**; **NIKO**; **SELIMA** and **JULIAN**; great grandchild **UNO** and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel C of Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 22, 2003
at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City
after the Holy Mass at 8:00 A.M.

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The family of the late

## ROGELIO A. CONCEPCION

of Sinait, Ilocos Sur; Lepanto, Benguet
and Marikina City, Metro Manila

*who peacefully joined his Creator on May 6, 2003,*

would like to thank all those who have condoled with them during the hours of their bereavement and those who have offered prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

From his beloved wife **Nora**, children **Neil** and **Bobbie**, and **Nate**, and granddaughter **Alessandra**.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

---

"You changed my sorrow into dancing. You took away my clothes of sadness, and clothed me in happiness. I will sing to you and not be silent. Lord, my God, I will praise you forever." PSALM 30: 11-12

## ALEX "HANDY" REYES, JR.

23 December 1927 – 18 May 2003

**Loving Husband, Doting Father, Lovable Lolo**
**Devout Christian & Environmentalist**
**Inventor of the "HANDY 4-in-One Machine"**

*"We love you very much and we will never forget you."*

**NENA and children: Nancy & Bob Lumen, Al & Nona, Marian, Corito, Grace & Greg Sy, Ji & Mitzi, Marge & Mike Gross, Pidge, John & Analen, Paul & Susan, Noel & Jessette, May and grandchildren: Shan (+), Steve, Joey, David, Marc, Kristine, Gerard, Gabbi, Mica, Kara, Kiana and Timmy. Brothers & sisters: Justice Andres(+) &Minerva; Dr. Arturo & Juliet; Teresita (+) & Fidel (+); Dr. Esperidion(+) & Lydia (+); Jose & Imelda; Sr.; Mary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus(+); Maria Luisa(+) & Julio(+); Armando(+); Consuelo & Vicente(+); Benjamin & Lita; Victor & Ning; In-laws: Dr. Benjamin & Alma Tancinco; Marina(+) & Juan Imperial (+); Mario & Leticia Tancinco, nephews, nieces, relatives, friends, household members and caregivers join in prayer for his eternal happiness in heaven.**

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila. Interment will be on Thursday, May 22 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Parañaque, after the 9:00 am Holy Mass in Mt. Carmel.

(In lieu of flowers, we will appreciate donations to: Carmel of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Naga; Pro-Life Foundation; Zero-Waste Recycling Movement of the Phil. Inc.)

"Dad left us with a dream in his mind and a song in his heart to be in a better place." (May Reyes)

"Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands." (2 Corinthians 5:1)

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*Mas vale cumplir un deber que ejercer un derecho.* – Gen. Jose Alejandrino y Magdangal

**Our dearly loved Mama, Granny, Mother-in-law, Cousin and Aunt**

## ELENA WEINMANN Y ALEJANDRINO VDA. DE SCHENKER

born in Arayat, Pampanga, on August 2, 1913, peacefully passed away at "Sonnweid" Wetzikon/Zürich, on Thursday, May 15, 2003, with her children Pauly and Christina at her bedside. She was 89 years old.

She lived in Arayat, Manila, and later Zürich, Los Angeles and Hawaii with her husband Paul **Schenker**. Her unflinching hospitality, openness and cheerfulness were an inexhaustible spring of joy to her family and friends. We will miss her generosity, as well as her straightforward and uncompromising way of dealing with life's challenges.

Our sincere thanks go to the staff at "Sonnweid," who took care of her since 1998, and to the members of the Philippine Nurses' Association Switzerland Chapter, who attended her round the clock during her last days.

She is survived by her immediate family:

**Anita Elena Calonder Gerster, née Schenker and Georg Gerster**, Zumikon
**Anya Désirée Calonder**, Zumikon

**Maria-Christina Schenker**, Los Angeles

**Paul Eduard Schenker and Christa Bodmer Schenker with Constantin and Tizian**, Zollikerberg
**Juliet Leonore Schenker**, London

**Alexandra Irene and Nanno de Vries-Schenker with Philip and Michiel**, Zollikerberg

Her passing is deeply felt by her two surviving cousins in Manila, Philippines: Adolfo Alejandrino y Dominguez and Hermes Alejandrino y Dominguez; her nieces, children of her late sister Nena Weinmann y Alejandrino Vda. de Jacinto: Helen Jacinto y Weinmann de Claridad, Heloise Jacinto y Weinmann, Lynn Jacinto y Weinmann de Fernandez, and Malou Jacinto y Weinmann.

She is also survived by her extended family, heirs of Gen. Jose Alejandrino y Magdangal and Adela Chuidian, Manuel Alejandrino y Magdangal and Gertrudis Medina Y Gabriel, Anita Alejandrino y Magdangal and Emile Weinmann, Joaquin Alejandrino y Magdangal and Concepcion Dominguez, Anselmo Alejandrino y Magdangal and Jacinta Medina, Pastor Alejandrino y Magdangal and Filomena Medina.

Interment will be held in Nordheim, Zürich, on Thursday, May 22, 2003, at 2:00 p.m. Requiem Mass in Manila, Philippines, will be held at the Chapel of the Eucharistic Lord, SM Megamall, 5th level, on May 21, 2003, at 5:30 p.m.

In memory of her death, the family would appreciate donations to "Stiftung Sonnweid," Bachtelstrasse 68, CH 8620 Wetzikon, PC 87-396986-0 and to the Philippine Nurses Association, Switzerland Chapter, ZKB, 8010 Zürich, PC 80151-4, Kto.-Nr. 1128-11124.406, for its project to support autistic children in the Philippines.

Donations may be sent to:

**Alexandra de Vries-Schenker**
Rüterwiesstrasse 11
8125 Zollikerberg, Switzerland

**Juan Alejandrino Medina**
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Makati City, The Philippines

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
**NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY**

## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Housing Authority (NHA) is inviting interested contractors who have completed similar projects costing at least 50% of the proposed contract and accredited with PCAB to bid for the contract listed below:

| Contract Package/Location | Approved Budget (mil.) | PCAB License | Work Description/ Duration |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mamanga Daku, Construction of 35 Housing Units, Plaridel, Misamis Oriental | P3.100 | "B"/MA for Building | Construction of 35 units low-cost housing units. |

A. Interested contractors are required to secure from the BAC Secretariat Office, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City the list of basic requirements for registration and Eligibility Statement Forms. Only contractors duly registered with the NHA shall be allowed to participate in the eligibility screening. Unregistered bidders must register not later than the deadline of submission of letter of intent on June 3, 2003.
B. The schedules of the eligibility screening and bidding activities are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Issuance of Application for Eligibility Forms | – May 20-June 6, 2003 |
| Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Req'ts | – June 10, 2003, not later than 10:00 a.m. |
| Issuance of Bid Documents | – June 10-19, 2003 |
| Pre-Bid Conference | – June 24, 2003 (10:00 a.m.) |
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C. Eligibility requirement forms may be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P200.00 at the NHA-BAC Secretariat Office with Tel. Nos. 929-60-16 and 928-45-61/65 local 262.
D. Bid documents shall be issued to eligible bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee of P2,500.00.
E. Bid security/deposits shall be in the form of cash, manager's or cashier's check only.
F. The provisions of the IRR of EO 40, shall govern all particulars relative to registration, eligibility screening, bidding, evaluation of bids, post-qualification and award of contract.
G. NHA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally any minor defect thereon, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

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## YOUNG IMAGE COURSE PRESENTS MEGA FASHION SHOW MAY 25, 2003

A personality development seminar workshop for kids, teens and young adults ages 5-21 years old opens on May 5-24 at the SM City Manila. Topic coverage includes **personality development, fashion and grooming, social graces, modern etiquette, effective communications with emphasis on presentation / conversation / leadership, skin care, basic and advance modeling.**

The summer program is organized by MSD Personnel Development Consultants with the participation of SM City Manila.

The seminar / workshop is a course designed to cater to the needs of the growing teens and to understand self better, improve their visual appearance and enable them to develop self-confidence.

At the end of the 3-week seminar workshop the participants are expected to learn **good grooming, poise and posture for excellent personality and self-confidence.** Participants will acquire **communication skills / techniques for better communications.**

Through the years, the Young Image Course has been spearheaded by an organization that specializes in training. MSD Personnel Development Consultants for almost 20 years now has been in the forefront of personality development systems and corporate image.

Former beauty queens and professional models and well-known personalities have been invited as resource speakers.

Some of the early birds are: **Christine Fernandez, Stephen Fernandez, Brian Bendo, Jave Jumawan, Nina Macalino, Julian Lao, Solomon Lee, Nica Rose Osete, Jessica Lao, Jacob Villanueva, Joanna Reyes, Katrina Sulit, Rowane Fesolbon, Selina Cortez, Kristine Allaine Chua, Arian Bentra, Toni Rose Radovan, Carlo Macalino and Michaela Mikmik Fernandez.**

The Philippine Daily Inquirer and SM Supermalls will present graduates of the Young Image Course will participate in a **Mega Fashion Show on May 25** in cooperation with SM City Manila Department Store, Mail and More and Island Photo.

For reservations and information call **785-4474** and look for **Stephanie / Marilyn.**

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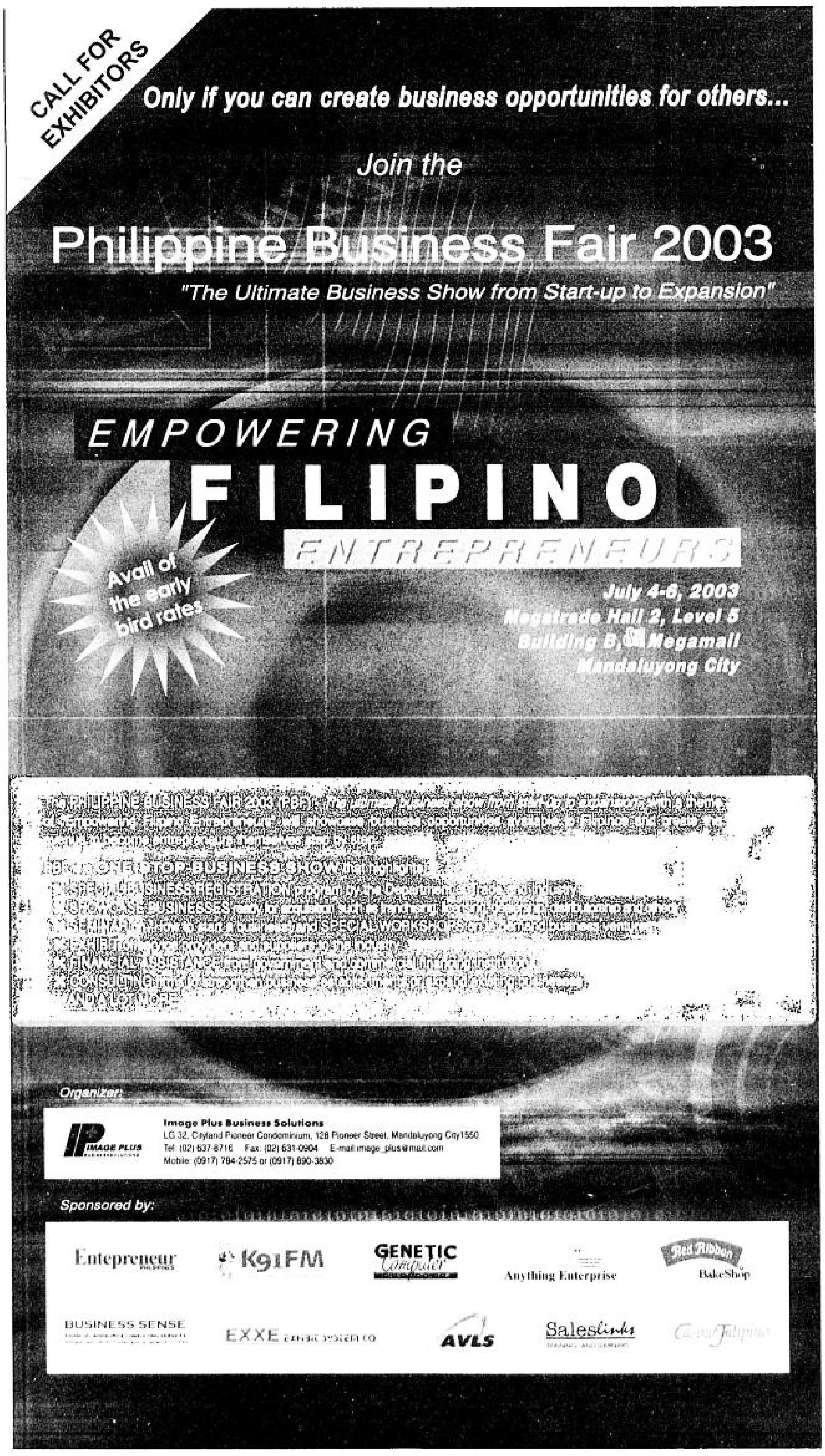

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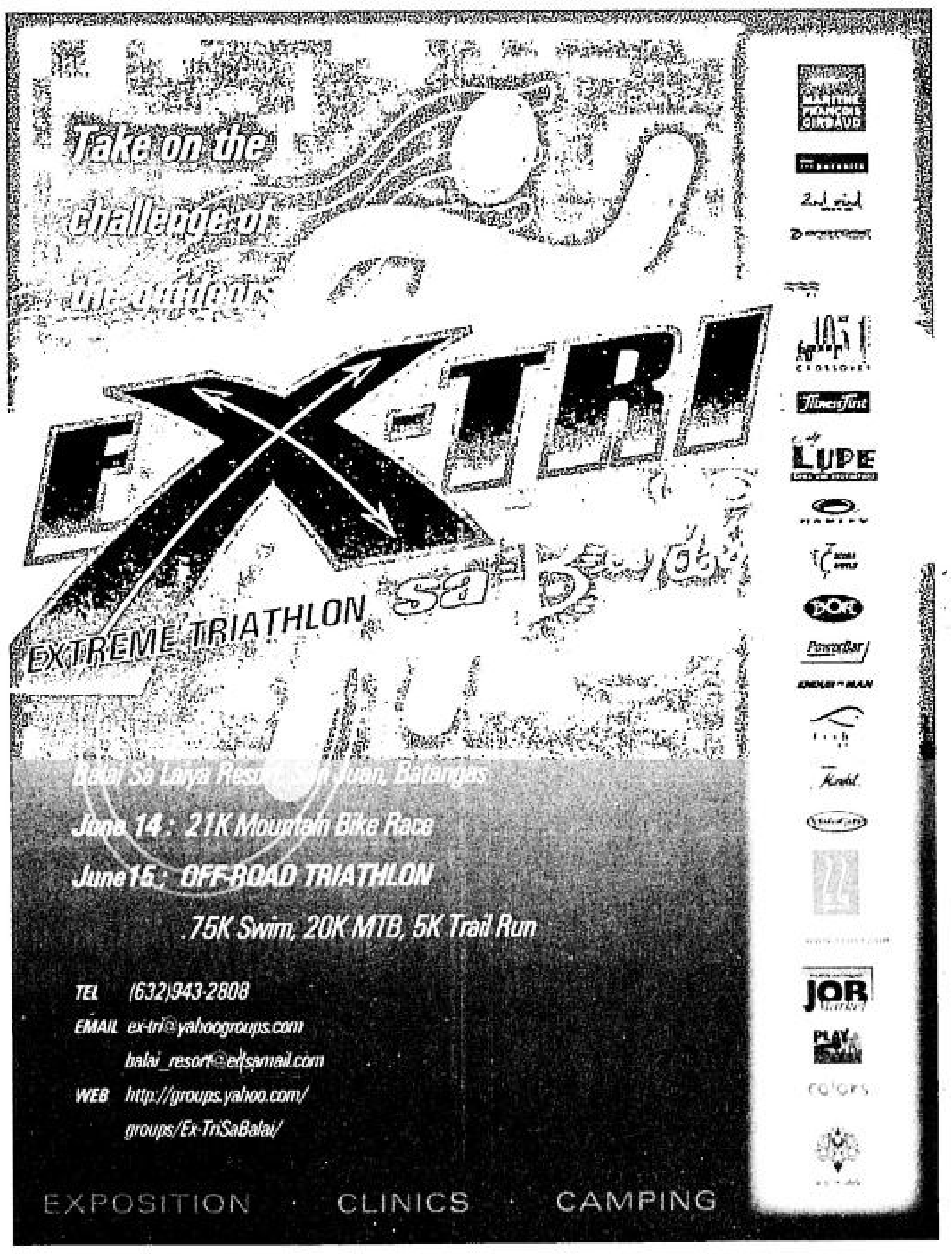

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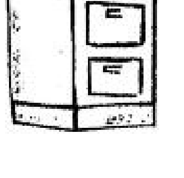

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

# Making 'role modules' out of lahar

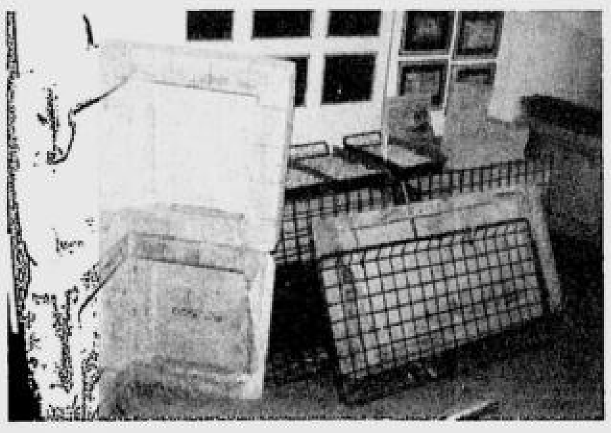
**Text and photos**
**by Tessa R. Salazar**

WHAT do you do with 11 billion cubic meters of volcanic material in your backyard? Why, build houses with them—lots and lots of houses.

This is what some construction engineers have had in mind for more than four years now.

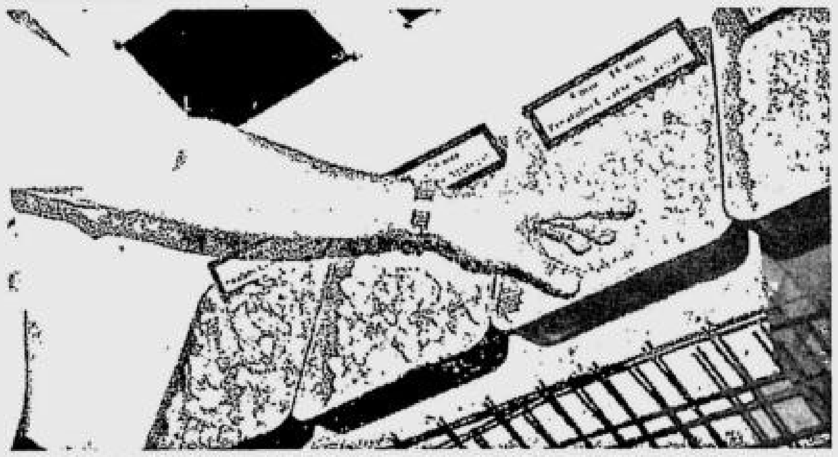
The entire concept runs like this: your average family can construct its own durable house using panels, beams and walls made of lahar. These pieces can be fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle, with minimum intervention from architects.

**THE COCONUT** shell is being used as lightweight aggregate material to make houses.



**THREE** housing components using lahar aggregates have been designed and tested. These are the L shape module for column, the rectangular module for wall, and the long span module for floor (not shown).

**ENGINEERS** Lejano and Irabon continue the search for indigenous materials for housing components.



**MT. Pinatubo's Ejecta will be transformed into different shapes and sizes of beams, panels and walls of houses.**

### Becoming a working reality

The good news is that concept is slowly becoming a working reality.

Filipino engineers of the Technological University of the Philippines have, for years, been tinkering with the pyroclastic material spewed by Mt. Pinatubo more than a decade ago. Together with scientists from the Department of Science and Technology, the Nihon University of Japan and Japan's Ministry of Education, their aim is to utilize Mt. Pinatubo's "Ejecta" material for construction and to find the most suitable mix for a beam and panel to be light enough to be carried by two people.

Extensive studies are being conducted on the properties of the lahar and the formulation of the mix for structural lightweight concrete.

So far, three housing components using lahar aggregates have been designed and tested. These are the "L shape" modules for columns, the rectangular modules for walls and the long span modules for floors.

### New concrete mix

A new concrete mix is being developed. This lightweight self-compacting concrete is envisioned to replace the present concrete mix design with enhanced characteristics that would facilitate mass production. The project will be using coconut shell—another indigenous material as another lightweight aggregate.

"The research (aims to) identify the correct mixture of lahar, cement, water and gravel and sand combination to produce lightweight aggregates and at the same time satisfy strength requirements," explained Dr. Bernardo A. Lejano, project leader.

### Bringing down costs

Lejano, dean of TUP's College of Engineering, and his team of engineers in TUP's Integrated Research and Training Center have been working on the project in cooperation with Nihon University.

A scale test was conducted in Nihon University to verify the structural performance of the modular panels when assembled into a one-story, single-room prototype house.

Japan's prototype, however, was built using expensive high-tech equipment, of which Philippine counterparts are having difficulty matching. Lejano said Filipino engineers are finding ways to manufacture the same type of materials without using such expensive equipment.

At present, each panel, including the steel, harness and bolts, costs P300. Though comparable with conventional structures (composed of hollow blocks and cement) in price, the panel built by Lejano's team turned out to be more durable through testing.

Lejano's team hopes to build one prototype house this year using lahar aggregates, and to eventually bring down construction costs further.

A modular panel is a structural element with a predetermined shape and size, cast in a factory, for mass production and rapid construction. The TUP engineers explained that based on architectural needs in the Philippine setting, a panel element measuring 0.5 meter wide by 1 meter long would be ideal for walls, slabs and beams.

The maximum weight that could be easily handled by two people was considered in determining the size of the panel. The structural design of the panel was based on the National Structural Code of the Philippines.

### Success

The project, at this stage, has already been considered a success. The engineers have prepared and tested prototype modular panels. Test results indicate the panel is structurally adequate, given the target concrete strength is attained.

In the near future, as Lejano's team prepares for mass production, instruction manuals will be provided to guide the assemblers as they fit the housing elements together.

Lejano described his latest mix as the most suitable combination so far.

"We still don't know if there's a more perfect combination that will yield a (more) lightweight and durable result. So far, based on our studies, our S3 coding is the most suitable," he said.

Engineer Rogelio R. Irabon, who gained mastery in materials concrete testing through extensive lab experience, said the mixture the team uses to satisfy the requirements for a lightweight structural concrete should weigh no more than 1,800 kg/cubic meter. Conventional concrete mix weighs about 2,400 kg/cubic meter.

In terms of strength, the team's structural concrete mix should be able to withstand a pressure of 2,500 psi (pounds per square inch), or 17 mega pascals. A conventional concrete mix's strength ranges between 2,000 and 3,000 psi.

Lejano's team, however, is aiming for a minimum strength of 3,000 psi.

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# Oriental garden blooms in the heart of Makati

A PLEASING landscape of colorful flowering shrubs of lilacs, spider lilies and a melange of golden showers, light pink flowering trees and purple trailing lantana growing amid golden bamboo and *palmeras* is the enchantment of the Oriental garden that will soon be in bloom at Oriental Gardens Makati. A wonderful reprieve from towering structures and high-rise cement buildings that currently dot the Makati skyline.

### Signature amenity

The garden that blooms in the heart of Makati, between Oriental Garden's Orchid and Lotus Towers, is only the beginning of what one can anticipate to find in this world-class condominium project. Soon to be completed is the 9th floor resort-style swimming pool that takes center stage next to an outdoor jacuzzi, rock garden, koi pond, moongate playground and meditation nooks that provide a sweeping view of both Makati and Manila skyline. This is a relaxing haven to come home to for the young executives who choose to make Oriental Gardens Makati their home.

You might call this a signature amenity typical in most of Federal Land's projects—the beauty of nature—beholden and celebrated!

As witnessed in their previous Valencia Hills project in San Juan—which is surrounded by lush, tropical gardens, a gazebo that overlooks a rolling hill with a variety of colorful shrubs, trees and blooming plants...a 200 meter jogging path that's secure from prying eyes...and the casual sounds of cascading fountains heard through the complex. Dubbed as "open-space luxury in the heart of the city"...what you'll find instead is a space for life! Where one can enjoy a casual, relaxed lifestyle right at home within the city.

### Basic thrust

The same is also true at Bay Gardens, located in Metropolitan Park, Pasay City—with its balmy air and cool breeze from Manila Bay... it's yet another luxurious residential condominium built within 40 hectares of wide roads, open space and the view of the majestic sunset you can only marvel at, while lounging on your poolside chair. Bay Gardens combine world-class amenities and the coziness of nature—without having to leave the city!

For Federal Land Inc., this is a basic thrust in its day-to-day business—to create communities that provide a well-deserved and improved lifestyle for the Filipino today and future generations.

Along with this vision is the company's commitment to "nation building" through the development of model communities for Filipino families and "social responsibility" in making a conscious effort in addressing issues and concerns for uplifting the communities that we live in.

### Reasons for success

Federal Land has been around for over 30 years, building vertical structures—both residential and commercial. Its proven track record in delivering projects on time, or at times, even earlier than scheduled, is another reason that sales in its projects have increased dramatically. Integrity, dependability and stability of the developer is a major criteria when choosing to invest in a new home.

Property management is another reason for Federal Land's continued success. Not only does the company develop its projects, but it also stay on to manage its property as well. Today, the firm has contributed largely in the upgrading and improvements of some of its initial projects, thus gaining not just the respect of their clients, but loyalty as well.

For Oriental Gardens Makati, expected delivery is set for 2004. But currently, the 31-story Orchid Tower is already at the 19th floor of construction, and topping off is tentatively scheduled for the third quarter of this year. That's about 18 months since its groundbreaking in February last year.

For more information on Oriental Gardens Makati, interested parties may visit its showrooms at the 17th floor of GT Tower (Ayala corner Dela Costa Avenue) in Makati or log on to the website at www.orientalgardens.com.ph. Federal Land is a member of the Metrobank Group of Companies.

Patent Application No.: 2-2000-2000-21

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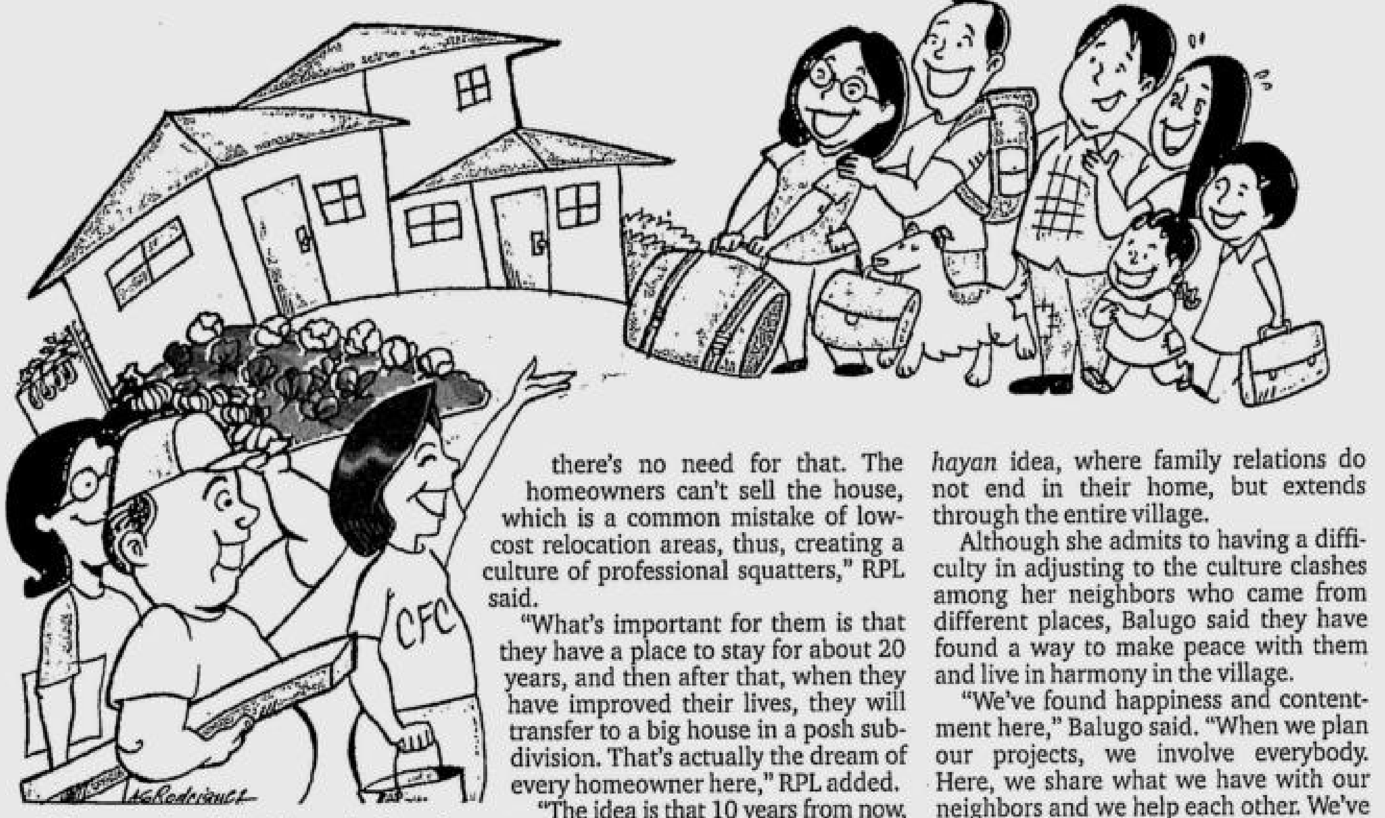
## NEW CONCEPT OF HOMEOWNERSHIP

# Former squatters get homes, values formation

**By Mei Magsino**
*PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



IN A WORLD of cruel reality, it is uncommon to find a place where former squatters from different cities live together in one village and make it a home where they grow vegetables in their backyard, help their neighbors, and teach their children the value of hard work.

But in reality, such a place really exists.

Here, the people who used to live in the squatters area are given a second chance at life and inspired to realize the value of hard work.

Gawad Kalinga village in Sitio Abra, Barangay Banay-banay II of San Jose houses 23 families from the squatters area of this town, Batangas and Lipa cities, and Alitagtag town.

The village sits on a 3,300 meters donated by a member-couple of the Couples for Christ, Max and Gloria Ochangco, from San Jose, California, USA.

According to RPL, project director of the Gawad Kalinga village who requested to be identified only by his initials, the construction of the GK village started May 15, 2002 and completed June 2, 2002.

"The construction of every GK village takes two to three weeks to complete," RPL said.

The first GK village was in San Jose Sico, Batangas City, then in Sitio Abra. Upcoming projects will be in Munting Indang, Nasugbu town, and Barangay Sambat, Tanauan City."

### Homeowners

Gawad Kalinga is a project of the Batangas Couples for Christ, an organization of Christian couples that congregate regularly to help each member strengthen their faith in God, and to help other people regain their faith.

Its 100 chapters in the province have all been participating in the GK by providing financial contribution or joining the construction effort designed to give a second chance to the poor.

"First, we identify the poorest among the poor to be the homeowners of the GK village houses that we build," RPL said, "We don't call them beneficiaries, we simply call them homeowners."

With the homeowners identified, they are then asked to start the construction of the village houses for the first 15 days.

"After that, the members of the Couples for Christ take over the construction. It takes two days and two nights of nonstop work to continue and finish the construction," RPL said.

When the houses are finished, the new homeowners transfer in their homes that were designed to prepare them for a better life ahead.

### In living color

The houses in the village have noticeable bright and pastel paint, creating a surrounding that brightens the mood of everyone who passes by and sees the village.

If that mood could brighten the day of passersby, the effect to its residents creates a better disposition in life.

"The bright colors of their homes are designed to give the homeowners a better outlook in life," RPL said. "Imagine waking up in the morning and seeing a village bathed by the rising sun in living colors. That inspires the homeowners to make their lives better. They learn to live and not just to survive."

In front of the houses, just across the road, is a vegetable and flower garden.

Here, the homeowners get their vegetable supply and income from the harvested products that they sell to visitors and members of the Couples for Christ.

The flower garden, which always blooms in profusion, also creates a feeling of satisfaction and beautifies the garden where the GK village hall is also located in its center.

Here, seedlings are also sold to patrons who flock to the village to buy the homeowners' products.

Each homeowner was given a plot in the garden to plant his vegetable or flower seeds and seedlings.

"The idea of gardening makes the homeowners realize that it takes patience and hard work to grow and develop a thing of beauty and good use," RPL said, "And seeing the good fruits of their labor inspires them to work harder."

### No title

One mistake of relocation housing facilities that the government has given to displaced squatter families is that their beneficiaries sold their houses and moved to another squatters' area for another relocation package where they can again get money from the government,

This mistake created a culture of professional squatters who worsen the reputation of the poor man's village.

Learning from that mistake, Gawad Kalinga village has devised a way to prevent its homeowners from selling their homes.

"We don't give out land titles because there's no need for that. The homeowners can't sell the house, which is a common mistake of low-cost relocation areas, thus, creating a culture of professional squatters," RPL said.

"What's important for them is that they have a place to stay for about 20 years, and then after that, when they have improved their lives, they will transfer to a big house in a posh subdivision. That's actually the dream of every homeowner here," RPL added.

"The idea is that 10 years from now, they would leave this village one by one and they would give their houses to other families who need a home," RPL said. "The GK's concept is community building, then bringing back the *kapitbahayan* attitude, and then the caring for others attitude."

### Not ordinary house

RPL said the GK concept doesn't just build a house. It builds a home for every family under its Tatag (build) program.

When the house is already built, next is education in all levels. For the 3-year-old children, education starts with the basic learning program under the Sibol (Grow) program, which teaches the children not just to read and write but also the good values ideal with the growing kids.

Then Sagip program for the elementary school students teaches the pupils about Christianity and values, and uplifts their morale.

Even the out-of-school youths are given the education they deserve under the Siga (Serving in God's Army) program.

"We encourage the out-of-school youths to go back to school through sponsorships that we were able to solicit from grantors," RPL said, "We have actually produced two college graduates last year. They graduated with honors."

### Real neighbors

Laura Balugo, 38, whose husband Anton chairs the Kapitbahayan, the homeowners' association in their village, has discovered how caring and sharing could shape an environment of real neighborhood.

Her family used to live in a house provided by her husband's boss in Barangay Galamay Amo in this town.

They transferred in the GK village on June 2, 2002, when the Couples for Christ had identified her family as one of its beneficiaries.

As the wife of the village leader, she encourages her neighbors to help each other.

That caring between neighbors, she said, gives more meaning to the *kapitbahayan* idea, where family relations do not end in their home, but extends through the entire village.

Although she admits to having a difficulty in adjusting to the culture clashes among her neighbors who came from different places, Balugo said they have found a way to make peace with them and live in harmony in the village.

"We've found happiness and contentment here," Balugo said. "When we plan our projects, we involve everybody. Here, we share what we have with our neighbors and we help each other. We've developed the relationship that good neighborhoods must have."

Balugo said that out of the 23 heads of families in the village, only two now are not employed. Nineteen of them have discovered the value of hard work and earning a living to keep their family in good financial condition.

"Most of them earn a living as carpenters, construction workers, and farm help," Balugo said. "And the good thing about them now is that they have come to utilize their resources to ensure that their family lives a good life."

### Self-help

Mornings in the village reveal a busy neighborhood where the men would live for work at 7 a.m. while the women would be busy preparing their kids for school.

Then, when the kids have gone to school, the women would clean their houses and water the plants in the vegetable and flower gardens, which were also part of the village.

Pacita Nace, 61, used to live in Sorsogon, then transferred to this town 20 years ago and lived in a house that charged a rental fee of P1,800 a month, which her family found too expensive.

Her husband, who earns a living by buying and selling bottles on the streets, found it too hard to earn the money for the rent, thus putting the family in a financially hard-up situation.

"But when we lived here in the GK village and with the members of the Couples for Christ helping and inspiring us every day to reach our own potentials, we realized that the rich people are good people. They took all the risks to help us, listen to our problems and help us help ourselves."

For Nace, life has taken a better turn for her entire family.

And they even learned the value of hard work.

"They don't give us food or money," Nace said. "But they taught us to work and ensure that there will always be food on the table."

### No more sleepless nights

Violy Catapang, 31, used to live in Sitio Ferry, Barangay Kumintang Ibaba in Batangas City, the village that used to be known as the haven of drug addicts.

She added, "We used to have sleepless nights because of incessant raids by the police on drug pushers. We were so scared that we could be caught in the crossfire."

What Catapang feared most was the possibility that her five children could either be victims of the drug problem or they could be involved in the drug trade.

Sitio Ferry was definitely not the right place to raise her children. But they had no other place to live for free, she thought.

Then came the opportunity to live in the Gawad Kalinga village.

"When we transferred here, we started to feel a real peace of mind. My husband got a job at the Lipa City water district as a repairman," Catapang said, adding, "here, we were able to overcome our financial problems and we finally feel how a real home with good neighbors feels like."

Even the language of her children took a change for the better. The bad languages from the slums have gone away.

They don't swear anymore and even learned how to be courteous and respect their elders.

"Before, the children refused to join the elders in our weekly prayer meeting," Catapang said, "But now, they even learned how to lead the prayers. Life here has given us a second chance at life."

Her children used to be shy and never trusted anybody.

But now, they trust their neighbors and the people from the village, which also respect them in return.

With their improved life, Catapang said her family plans to get their own big house in a posh subdivision in the future.

"When our children finishes school and our lives improve, we will give this house to other people who need a home. That is like giving back to the needy what God has given us when we were in need," Catapang said. "The effort to improve our lives is the first step to get there."

### Bridging worlds

Gawad Kalinga started in 2000 all over the Philippines. It is a Christian work of bringing good tidings to the poor.

On June 2, 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo visited the GK villages and gave P30 million to help the project, of which P900,000 went to Batangas province's projects.

Ms Macapagal even lauded the GK village for providing a second chance for the poor people to live a better life in a better environment.

For the members of the Couples for Christ, GK is a means of giving back to the poor the good graces that God has given them.

"But we don't give them the fish to eat. If we do that, they will just ask for more and become lazy," RPL said. "What we give them is the chance to catch the fish, a chance to help them help themselves."

According to him, building the bridge that connects the rich and the poor to work together for a better future is the solution for today's poverty problem.

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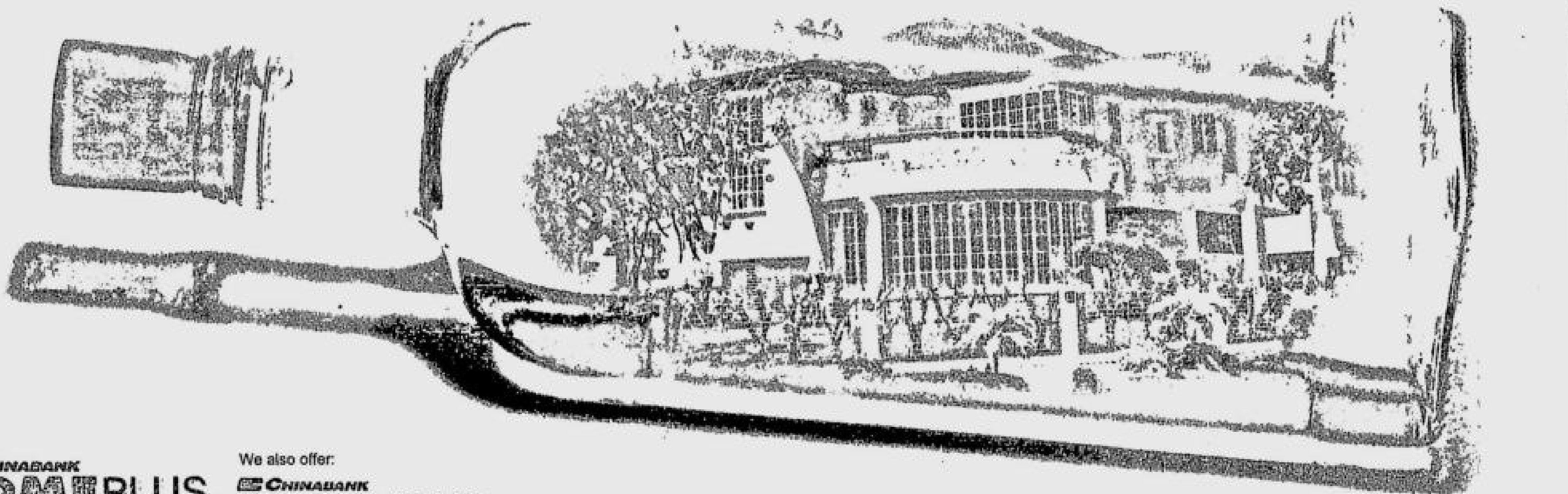

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## Makati fire safety awardees

AYALA Land Inc. buildings continued to add to an already sterling and distinguished track record as a leading office venue with the domination of the recent Makati Fire Safety Compliance Awards.

All four ALI buildings—6750 Office Tower, Ayala Life FGU Center, Tower One and Exchange Plaza and MSE Building—in the Makati central business district were cited for being models of adherence to stringent standards of the Fire Code of the Philippines and the National Building Code for completeness, installation, maintenance, periodic testing and upkeep of fire prevention and safety systems. These buildings are managed by the Ayala Property Management Corp.

Makati City administrator Nicanor Santiago awarded the plaque of recognition to Ayala Life-FGU Center senior building administrator Jerry Muhi.

The annual safety awards are given out by the city government of Makati in cooperation with the Rotary Club of Makati, Mafsafi and Macea.

# Financing your dream home

(First of 2 parts)

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

ALTHOUGH some home buyers pay in cash, most need financing to purchase their dream home. Once you have decided to purchase a home and avail of financing, remember that you have a lot of options or access routes toward borrowing money. You may borrow from banks, lending companies, developers, sellers and even from your relatives and friends.

## Sources of financing

The many sources of financing include:

- **Banks**—The most common source of financing for homes, most banks have a separate division that takes care of and processes loan applications. Extensive paperwork and documentation is required before any amount of loan is released.
- **Financing Institutions**— You may obtain financing from lending institutions which are less formal than banks. Be aware though that not all of them have a facility for a real estate mortgage.
- In-House (Seller Held)—In-house financing is common for big developers in which they have their own financing facility for their projects. In buying a home from them, you may choose to buy in cash, through bank, or through in-house financing. In buying property from individual owners, you may also negotiate for a seller-held financing. The seller may agree that you pay in installments depending on your agreement.
- **Personal Loans**—Filipinos help each other when it comes to big purchases, especially real estate. You may ask the help of your parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and even friends. Make sure that you have a clearly written payment agreement for many relationships and friendships had been strained due to misunderstandings in the handling of personal loans.

## Borrowing from the bank

Although there may be many sources, understanding financing from the banks is important since this probably will be the route that you will choose.

## Understanding interest rates

Housing mortgages are usually paid in equal monthly installments at a predetermined amount of time.

When the bank tells you that the interest rate is 10 percent, it means that you will pay interest based on a diminishing balance scheme in which for every payment that you make, a part of it will pay the principal and the remaining will serve as the interest for the loan.

Interest payments are larger at the start of the loan and gradually "diminish" toward the end of the term as principal payments become larger.

## The C's of credit

Whenever you borrow money from the bank, they will look at the different C's so make sure that you understand them clearly. The C's are:

- **Character**—This is the way you are and the way you live as a person. When they conduct a character check on you, they look at your background, what type of work you do, etc. The banks look at your integrity and honesty in dealing with your obligations.
- **Credit Rating**—This is your previous record on whether you have availed of credit in the past. There is a check if you have paid every obligation diligently and on time. Defaults in loan payments, credit card bills and other obligations will be detected and can gravely affect your ability to access a loan. Make sure that you pay your bills on time so when the time comes for you to borrow a large amount to finance your home, you will have a healthy credit rating.
- **Capacity to Pay**—Your income is checked to make sure that you have the capacity to pay the required amortization amount. Your gross income is calculated and your living expenses are deducted. A certain amount of your monthly savings may be allowed to cover the monthly payments on your loan. The type of employment or business that you are in is also considered in assessing your capacity to pay.
- **Collateral**—This is the loan value of the property that you are using as collateral to get your loan. Remember that the maximum amount of money that you can borrow is limited by your capacity to pay and the loan value of your property. Banks follow a set of standards and procedures when it comes to appraising your property.

## Preparing the documents

Different banks may approach the loan application process in a different way and may put weight on certain factors more than another bank.

Preparing your application documents takes time and it is best to prepare them as soon as you can. The documents consist of two parts about the borrower and about the collateral.

The standard requirements that most banks require include:

## Documents about the borrower

Documents about yourself as the borrower are necessary to assess your character, integrity, capacity to pay and credit rating. These include:

- **Application Form**—You disclose personal information on this form including your salary and that of your spouse. Your finances are also listed and tabulated and the net amount of disposable income is arrived at. Together with the application form, you should supplement the bank with information that will help them assess fully your character and capacity to pay. These documents include:
- **Certificate of Employment**—You can get this from the HR department of your company. The details of your service specifically your salary and the length of time that you have been with the company are written in the certificate.
- **Income Tax Return for the Last 3 Years**—Banks require that you present your tax return for the last three years. This is an indication that you are gainfully employed or have a business that is legitimate and is making money.
- **Bank Statement**—The lender looks at your cash flow. Bank statements and copies of your bank account are to be submitted to your lender for evaluation. The movement of money in your account determines how you earn and use money.
- **Pay Slips**—These may be required just to see how much net income you get per month. Salary loans and deductions are reflected in your pay slips.
- **Business Papers**—If you are a businessperson, the registration papers of your business may be required.
- **Statement of Other Income**—If you have other sources of income, you state this in your application so that your total capacity to pay is properly evaluated.

Depending on the policies of the lender and the type and amount of loan that you are applying for, all or just some of the aforementioned documents may be required. The main purpose of submitting the necessary documents is to convince the bank that you are credible and capable of paying for the loan that you would intend to borrow.

*(To be continued)*

**BUILDING DREAMS**

> Submitting the necessary documents mainly aims to convince the bank that you are credible and capable of paying for the loan that you would intend to borrow

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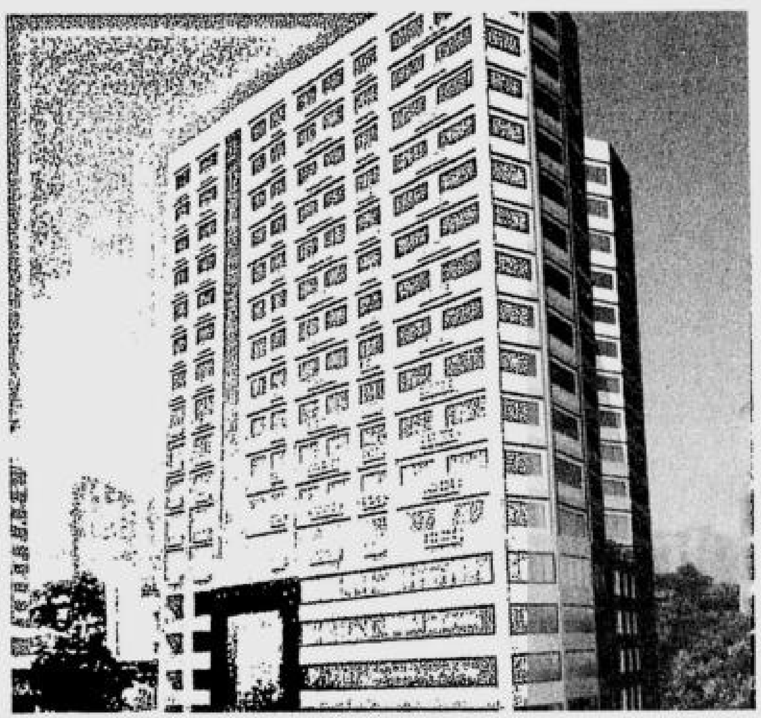

7 DOLORES Place

# HLURB approves dev't of 7 Dolores Place condo

THE BOARD of Commissioners of the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board has approved the development permit for the 7 Dolores Place, a residential condominium at No. 7 Main Ave., Cubao, Quezon City.

Charlie V. Gorayeb, chair and chief operating officer of owner-developer Goram Development Corp., said that government approval of the project will speed up the company's contribution to the successful implementation of the medium- and high-rise building (MHRB) program of Home Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund) and the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

Housing Secretary Michael T. Defensor chairs the HUDCC and HLURB, while lawyer Romero Federico S. Quimbo is Pag-Ibig Fund president and CEO.

With the government's MHRB program on stream and Pag-Ibig Fund support for the project construction, Gorayeb stressed, uninterrupted project completion is assured.

## Affordable package

The condominium project offers one of the most affordable packages in the market. Most units are priced below P1 million, with no down payment, only P5,000 condominium association membership fee, P4,000 monthly payment for 24 months, and P8,500 monthly starting the 25th month onward.

"And all these bargains," Gorayeb underscored, "in a project with upscale features and amenities, and prime location—some 200 meters from Edsa, convenient distance to Farmers Plaza and Santolan MRT Stations, Greenhills Shopping Center, and walking distance to the upscale Mariposa Street."

The 7 Dolores Place architectural and engineering plans have been fashioned to provide affordable and comfortable residential units in prime Metro Manila areas, according to leading designer Turalba and Associates and Goram Development Corp.

Application forms for membership in the condominium association which will be submitted to Pag-Ibig Fund for processing, may be secured from Vitus P. Cruz, interim president, 7 Dolores Place Condominium Association, through fax 723-4920 or e-mail: goram@mindgate.net. For inquiries, call 723-4922.

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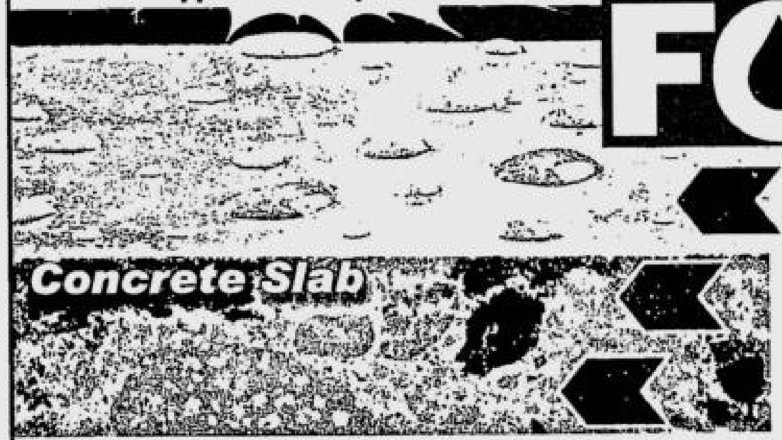

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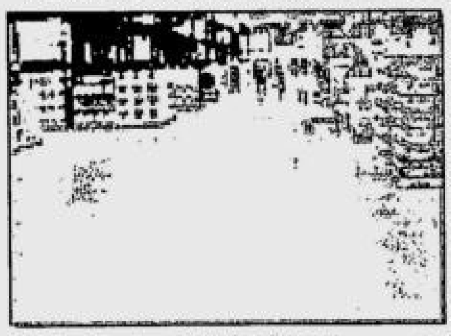

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# BUSINESS

## RP imports rose 11.4% in March to $3.24B

**By Michelle V. Remo**

PHILIPPINE imports rose 11.4 percent to $3.424 billion in March from $3.073 billion last year on the back of increased purchases of electronics and components, the National Statistics Office (NSO) announced yesterday.

The NSO said in a report that electronics and components, which are used as inputs for the local semiconductor industry, accounted for 46.4 percent of total imports at $1.59 billion.

With exports rising 4.9 percent to $8.508 billion for the period ending March, the trade deficit fell 203.8 percent to $650 million in the first quarter from a surplus of $626 million last year, the NSO said.

A rise in imports is usually considered a positive sign, as this signals an increase in the purchase of raw materials that could result in increased production to meet higher domestic and foreign demand.

An analyst from a private brokerage house said, however, that it was still too early to tell whether the import rise translated into increased consumption.

The analyst said the import surge for the first three months could just be a result of pent-up demand following consumer jitters over the US-Iraq war.

Ma. Socorro Zingapan, director for national policy and planning of the National Economic and Development Authority, on the other hand, believed that there was a real increase in demand that resulted in the rise in imports.

"Our imports in January last year posted a negative 18.68-percent growth and rebounded to a positive 45.14 percent, while imports for February last year posted a minimal 0.62-percent growth and then jumped to 21.4 percent. This clearly shows that the significant increase is more than just a base effect," she said.

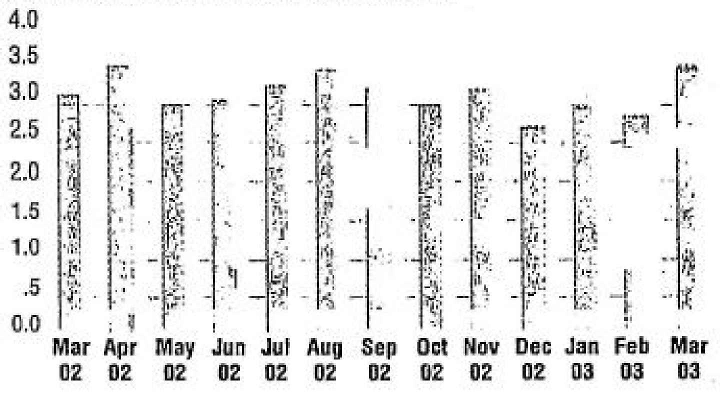
The NSO said payments for raw materials and intermediate goods rose 4.1 percent to $1.350 billion compared with last year's $1.297 billion.

Capital goods, led by telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, meanwhile, accounted for $1.346 billion worth of purchases, up 10.6 percent from last year's $1.217 million.

*With a report from AFP*

**IMPORTS**

(March 2002 to March 2003, in billion US dollars



## GMA to seek $95-M fund for SMEs

**By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.**

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will ask Washington for $95 million in technical and financial assistance to boost the growth of local small and medium enterprises, Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said.

Roxas, who is part of the President's entourage to her US state visit this week, said the bulk of the funds would go to the state-owned Small Business Corp.

Roxas said SB Corp. would get $30 million to augment its fund base since it has not yet attained its desired capital base of P5 billion.

Roxas said the government was also hoping to get $25 million from the US government, which it would use as seed money for an equity venture fund that would give capital to promising SMEs over the next five years.

SB Corp. also needed at least $25 million for the credit-scoring system that would make up for the banks' lack of information on SMEs, consequently increasing their confidence in lending to small businessmen.

Roxas said the credit system would also serve as a valuable source of information for potential creditors and investors searching for foreign and local partners.

Another $15 million would be used to revitalize 20 community-based business centers for SMEs that would cater to the needs of small enterprises in the countryside.

These centers are patterned after US Small Business Investment Centers which provide potential American entrepreneurs technical and financial assistance to translate their bright ideas into reality.

Microenterprises and SMEs comprise 99 percent of all business establishments in the country, employ 70 percent of the entire labor force and contribute 32 percent in added value to the economy.

## Globe unfazed by Sun's entry

**By Abigail L. Ho**

GLOBE Telecom Inc. is confident that it can end the year with "healthy" numbers as it does not see Gokongwei-owned Digitel Mobile Phil. Inc.'s Sun Cellular as that big a threat just yet.

"At this point, we're not very concerned with Sun. It's not yet that stable. We're watching it but we're not overly concerned at this time," Globe chief finance officer Delfin Gonzalez Jr. said during yesterday's investors briefing.

Globe president and chief executive Gerardo Ablaza Jr. added in a separate interview that the company's first-quarter figures indicated that 2003 could be another good year for Globe.

"The first quarter results give us a little bit more confidence that (full-year) results will be healthy and strong," he said.

Globe posted P2 billion in net income in the first quarter, up 39 percent from last year's P1.4 billion. Revenues likewise went up by 9 percent to P11.7 billion from P10.8 billion the previous year.

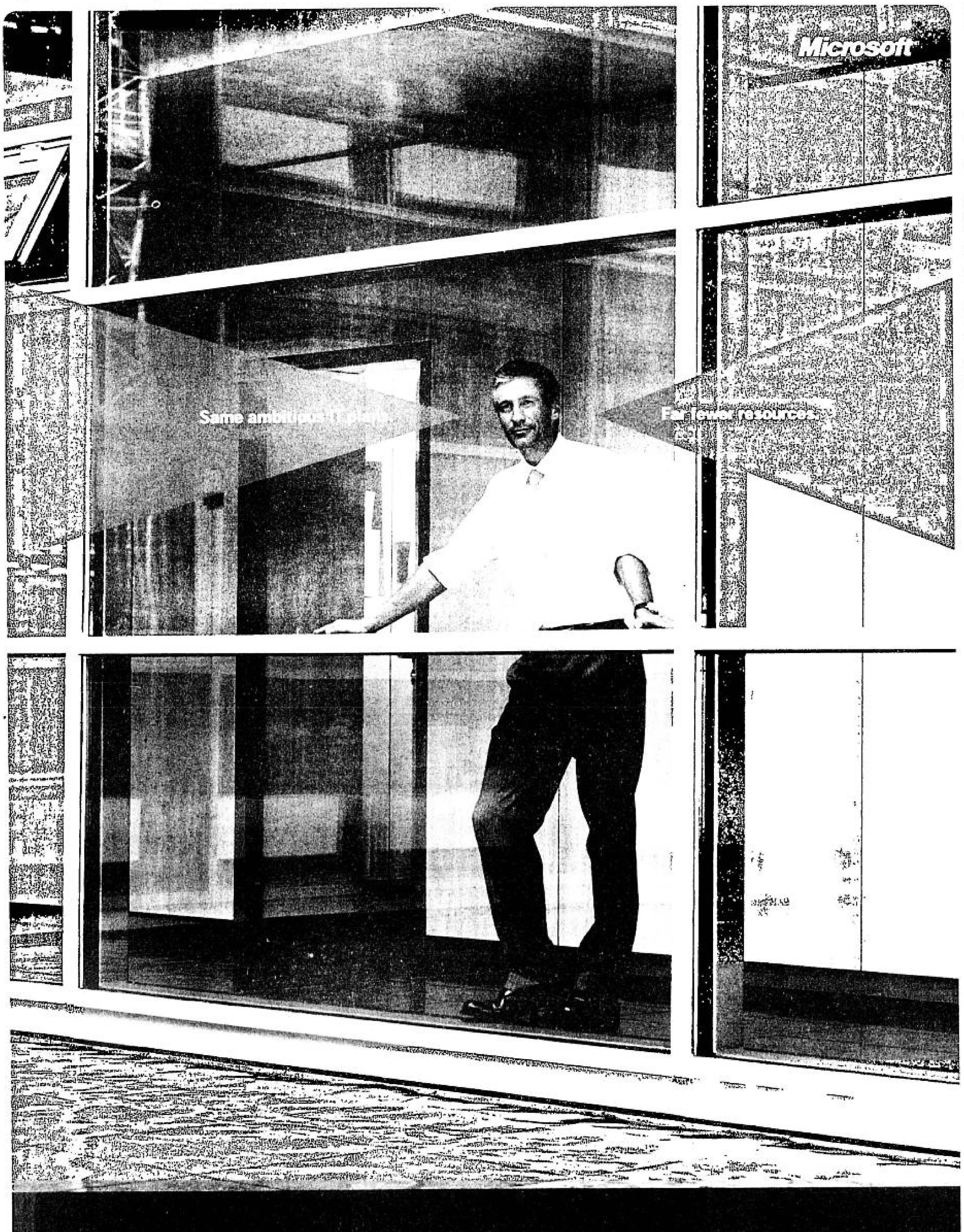
While the Ayala-led firm said it was not that alarmed with the new player, it disclosed a 123-percent increase in marketing expenses during the first three months of the year.

From P319 million in the first quarter of 2002, Globe spent P711 million in the same period this year for various marketing, acquisition and retention campaigns.

"We're just addressing the various fronts of our competitors," Gonzalez said.

Globe is also currently reviewing its earlier wireless penetration rate projection of 25 percent by 2005, as the latest cellular subscriber numbers indicate a 20.5-percent penetration rate as of the end of the first quarter.

Wireless penetration rate is measured based on an 80-million Philippine population. A 20.5-percent penetration rate means that around 20.5 percent of 80 million are mobile phone subscribers.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For more information, visit www.microsoft.com/philippines.

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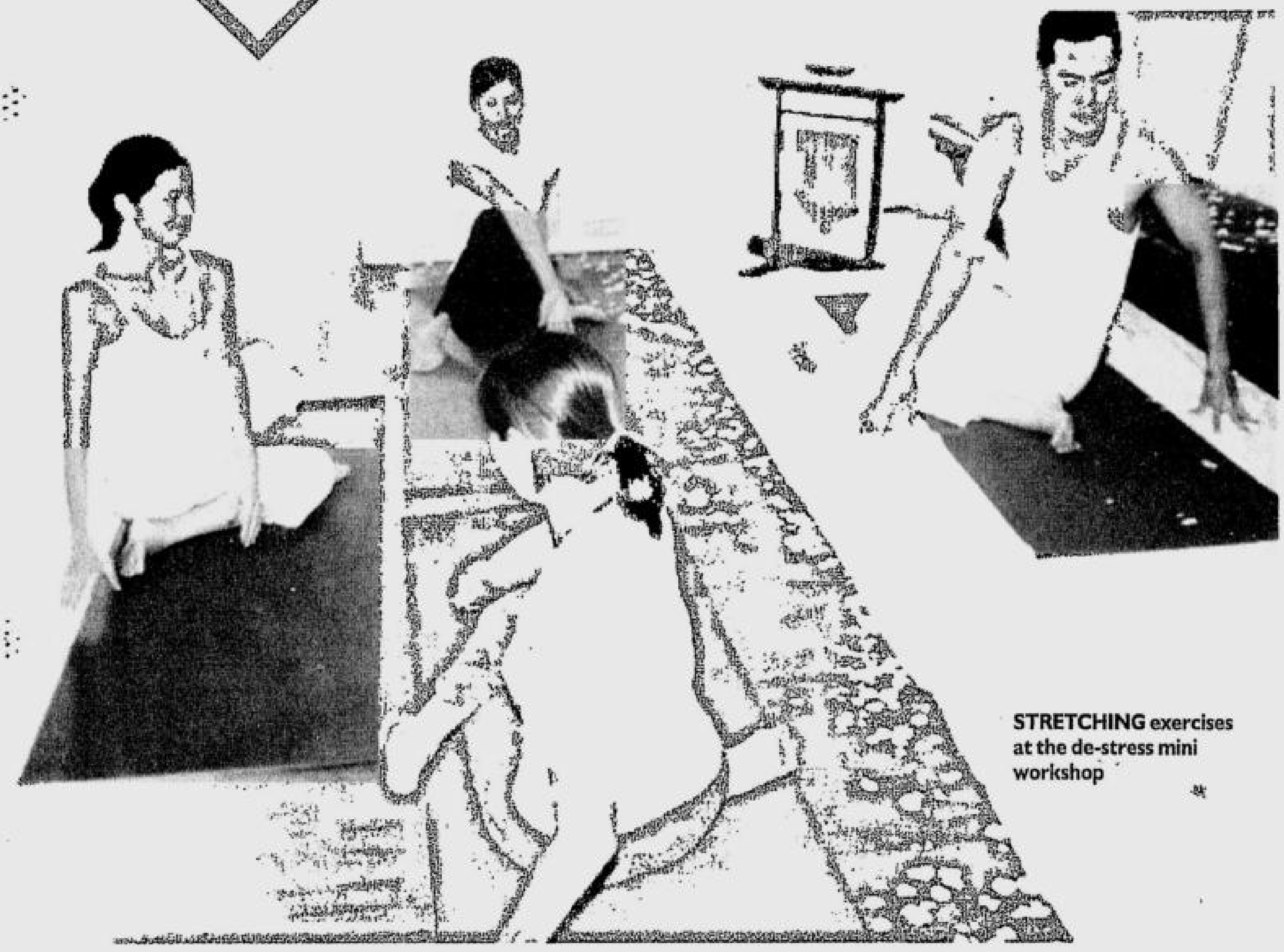
**STRETCHING** exercises at the de-stress mini workshop

**ANGEL** Aquino and Luxasia general manager Mia Nolasco-Cuenca

# De-stressing workshop highlights launch of new scent

NEW age music, fusion cuisine, and a personalized mini-workshop in de-stressing were highlights of the recent meditation lunch that marked the introduction of the newest scent from the House of Bulgari. The trendy Temple Bar was transformed into a white and silver oasis—echoing the purity of the elegant colors of Au The Blanc bottle.

The invitational launch was hosted by TV personality/model Angel Aquino, who presided over the de-stress mini workshop (featuring breathing techniques, basic yoga movements, as well as stretching exercises) alongside certified yoga instructor Eric Samonte.

Sharing the spotlight were the manage-

DE-STRESSING/ C2

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# It's never too late to . . .

**INSIDE OUT**

*Cory Quirino*

OFTENTIMES we think that our own personal growth has reached a plateau, that beyond a certain limit or distance or stage in our life we cannot go any further.

When this mood seizes you and threatens to stifle the unexpressed creativity that's left in you, stop. Then finish this line. It is a simple exercise, both mental and psychological, that opens the door to many possibilities.

For some, it could mean "get on with your life" or "finish what you've left undone" or "accomplish what you've long postponed" or simply "listen to your heart."

Thus, it is never too late to…

**Embrace a healthy lifestyle.** It begins with the first step, your desire to feel better and look better. If you have enthusiasm, enroll in a gym today.

**Shift careers.** The best job, they say, is the one that feels less of a chore and more of fun. So if your job is wearing you down…

**Adopt a new attitude.** Sometimes, when you change the way you look at things, you can also expect new and positive changes to happen to you. Begin by learning how to smile at the start of the day.

**Learn a new skill.** Go on, do it.

Want to improve your voice? Sign up for voice classes at Ryan Cayabyab's Studio (tel. 844-3330).

Learn how to cook or bake with Lifestyle Kitchen Rescue columnist Reggie Aspiras.

Improve your dancing skills. For private groups, call 726-6792 and look for Anamarie or Poncy Quirino.

**Be a better parent.** Since it's still summer, take advantage of the free time your children have. Instead of keeping them at home, allow them to expand their knowledge and develop their talents. Many malls have family-oriented activities.

Alabang Town Center: the Orobia Art Workshop for kids from age 7 and up (tel. 775-0010).

SM Megamalls: Summer Bowling Clinics from ages 8 and up and Mad Science Workshops, May 20 and 22, SM Sucat and Manila, June 3, 5, 10 and 12, SM City Fairview/Centerpoint (tel.3745399). Faber Castell's Animation and Imagination Workshop (tel. 361-7391 or 92).

**Be more prosperous.** Attend Dero Pedero's various workshops on thinking and being a millionaire (tel. 8975167).

**Have a total makeover.** Don't be afraid to color your hair or sport a new look. There are well-known hairdressers who can help you. Jesi Mendez (tel. 812-0369); Fanny Serrano (tel. 722-0992); Frank Provost (tel. 895-3401).

**Pamper yourself.** If there is anyone you should spoil, it's yourself. Yes, you deserve that half morning in a spa with your girlfriends. Call Orient Day Spa for their body polishing and deep relaxation packages at 811-3368 or 813-4591.

**Be a gardener.** Is the call of the earth too strong to resist? Start planting then. It you don't have a farm, plant vegetables and fruit trees in your backyard. If you don't have a garden, plant it in your neighbor's garden or a nearby park.

**Get better at keeping house or doing the groceries.** There is always a better way. Self-help books can teach you; otherwise, there's always your mother to turn to. For quick fixes on stains and minor emergencies, step into Watson's at SM (which even sells anti-SARS masks!).

**Have better, smoother skin.** Eat skin-boosting foods like green leafy vegetables and fresh fruits, wear a sunblock (SPF-15 minimum) and do your three step ritual—cleanse, tone and moisturize. Once a week, exfoliate with sugar and olive oil for the face (two-minute rub) and salt and coco virgin oil for the body (five-minute scrub). Rinse with warm water and soap and end with cool water.

**Be your own best friend.** Don't be so hard on yourself. Expecting perfection from yourself is an impossibility and an injustice, just as allowing others to devalue and deprecate you is a sin against your own self-worth. One can take only as much punishment from others as you can inflict on yourself. So, be kinder to yourself.

> Get on with life by learning a new skill, shifting careers, or acquiring a more positive attitude

**Dream.** A dream is what you want for yourself, and not what others want for you. No one can dream for you. This is your exclusive birthright. If you hold back your dreams, they will never take flight. And should you delay them, they may never become a reality for you. Don't be afraid to dream.

## Dream exercise

Sit in a quiet corner. Close your eyes. Ask yourself what your fondest dream is. As soon as the answer comes to you, open your eyes and write it down on a piece of paper. Then, paste it onto your wall or mirror. Your dream is now a goal. Now, make it happen.

It is certainly never too late to be happy. While there is no permanent release from pain in this world, there is also the promise of joy alongside it. In the way of Gary Zukav's "The Heart Of The Soul," only you can create your happiness by:

1. Not ignoring your painful emotions;
2. Understanding the cause of your pain;
3. Releasing your anger, guilt, jealousy and vengefulness, which are forms of fear that are toxic and fatal;
4. Not running away from the pain via distractions like workaholism, alcoholism, drug or sexual addiction, food binging, raging, etc.;
5. Being intimate with yourself. Cocoon yourself if you must. You create intimacy when you shift from the pursuit of external power (the ability to manipulate and control other people and situations) to the pursuit of authentic power: the alignment of your personality with your soul, where your heart resides.

A wise old man was asked, "Master, between the mind and the heart, which one speaks the truth?"

The Master replied, "Which one urged you to seek an answer?"

The seeker said, "My heart."

"My son," the Master said, "Therein lies your answer."

Love and light!

*Total Wellness: Body, Mind and Spirit, a whole-day workshop by Jimmy Licauco and Cory Quirino now sponsored by Nestle's Nutren (a nutritional food supplement) for only P400 per person. Open to associations and clubs. Call 898-0001 local 7183 (Hazel) or local 6713 (Jean).*

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

# De-stressing workshop highlights . . .

From page C1

**MODEL** and actress Angel Aquino and yoga instructor Eric Samonte preside over the de-stress mini workshop

ment team of Luxasia, exclusive distributor of Bulgari's full range of Eau Parfumee line, led by general manager Mia Nolasco-Cuenca, group product manager April Marquez and product manager Ann Wongchuking.

Gracefully named "Au The Blanc," this perfume is a delicate creation with warm and spiritual notes that evoke moments of relaxation and well-being.

Au The Blanc has as its main ingredient, white tea, a tonic reserved for the Chinese imperial family and treasured as an elixir for immortality due to its antioxidant and revitalizing properties that heal both mind and body.

Other exotic elements include the abelmosk as well as the Artemisia, which since medieval times has been known for its restful action. The warm and discreet sensuality of amberbris and musk make Bulgari's latest scent totally unique.

Seen at the launch were designer Rhett Eala, club stars Erick Edralin and Miko Valenzuela, Macy Pineda, restaurateur Elbert Cuenca, Philip Cu Unjieng, Bibay Nolasco and Connie Nolasco-Lopez.

**ANGEL** interviews Bulgari product manager Ann Wongchuking.

Take Charge Doc!
Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.
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It is true that there is an average increase of 30% in hospital bills for room and board upgrades. But do note that this exclude the professional fees (PF) of your attending physicians. There is practically no agreed rate for their incremental charges on PF. Once a room upgrade is in effect they may charge depending on their own standards and you are billed less of what is covered by MEDICard.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Internal Medicine is the chosen field of specialization of **Dr. Berwyn Flores,** our accredited specialist based at Manila Central University-Filemon D. Tanchoco Medical Foundation, Inc. Doc Berwyn finished his residency training for his specialization also at MCU-FDTMF. He subspecializes in Cardiology, which he finished in 1995 at the Philippine Heart Center. Members may seek the services of Dr. Flores at his clinic, Room 11 of the MCU hospital, every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 5 PM.

At the World Citi Medical Center in Quezon City, members may seek the services of accredited specialist, **Dr. Alfred Q. Lasala II**. This University of Santo Tomas Medicine graduate earned his residency training for his specialization in General Surgery at the UST Hospital. Doc Alfred is a Fellow of the International College of Surgeons and is a member of the Philippine Medical Association. He is married to ER Medicine-Physician Dr. Eden Ferrer-Lasala and likes to take time enjoying his favorite sports of badminton and basketball. For consultations, visit Dr. Lasala at his clinic, Room 207 every Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 9 AM to 12 noon.

**Dr. Lea Bernardo Dilag** is MEDICard's accredited specialist at the B.A. Hospital in Saluysoy, Meycauayan, Bulacan. Dr. Dilag, a Manila Central University Medicine graduate specializes in Pediatric and Family Medicine. She also holds subspecialization training in Infections of Neonates and has with her more than 18 years of clinical experience. Doc Lea is married to businessman, William Dilag with whom she has four wonderful children. Members may visit her clinic at the B.A. Hospital for their consultation needs every Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 AM to 12 noon.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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# The gospel of Mary Magdalene

**INNER AWARENESS**

*Jaime T. Licauco*

As expected, reader reactions to my May 6, 2003 column giving documentary evidence that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were lovers were quick and varied, ranging from "great interest" and "delight" to "shock" and "anger."

A good number asked where to buy a copy of the Nag Hammadi book, which was the main source of my information. One angry reader just couldn't accept or believe the story by the apostle Philip about Mary Magdalene and Jesus, and felt he merely made it up to discredit Christ. "This (Nag Hammadi) Library is run by heretics," he says, (and therefore) "I would presume its compositions are nothing but heresies." The other portions of his letter were completely unintelligible.

On the other hand, some readers were relieved to discover that Jesus was also human like us and, therefore, we can relate to him better. For example, Rodolfo Ablazo, a human interest writer from Tarlac, says, "I am a Catholic, but I can vividly remember how I challenged my professors in theology and philosophy to find out who Christ really is. I am inclined to believe, especially upon reading your article, that Christ really had a relationship with Mary Magdalene. The Bible, after all, does not reveal everything that transpired during his time. It was compiled by man through the dictates of the Holy See and thus kept from the public all that may cause scandal to the Church."

Here are excerpts from the letter of another reader who feels Mary's wisdom could even equal that of Christ:

"I'm writing to express delight in your column, since I have been believing that Mary Magdalene was Jesus' life partner, not just his devoted follower.

"I know this particular article will not only be subjected to vicious attacks from orthodox and conservative Church officials, but from churchgoers as well, due to the well known fact that most 'Christians' are squeamish about sex, what more of Christ's, their God's, sexuality.

"Not only do I think that Magdalene was Jesus' life partner, I think that her wisdom and spirituality could have been equal to his. She could have been some sort of spiritual leader like Jesus. Some even say she was a teacher of Tantra and Sacred Sensuality. It might be that years of religious politics transformed her sensuality into immorality, making us believe that she is just a recovering sinner, rather than holy, and gave the status of the Holy Woman to Mary, the Virgin, sexless and not a truly complete woman…

"Although the 'Virgin' is obviously an important phase for a girl, it should not stop there. It perpetuates an imbalance and incomplete vision of a woman. It promotes a culture of self-denial, self-loathing and downright neurosis."

I am amazed at the insight displayed by the above reader because a Gospel of Mary Magdalene exists among the Nag Hammadi texts confirming what she just said above.

### Dialogue and revelation

Here is the commentary of Karen L. King on this lost Gospel of Mary:

"The extant text of The Gospel of Mary can easily be divided into two parts. The first section describes the dialogue between the (risen) Savior and the disciples…

"The second section contains a description by Mary of special revelation given her by the Savior. At Peter's request, she tells the disciples about things that were hidden from them. The basis for her knowledge is a vision of the Lord and a private dialogue with him. Unfortunately, four pages of the text are missing here so that only the beginning and end of Mary's revelation are extant…

"After Mary finishes recounting her vision to the disciples, Andrew and then Peter challenge her on two grounds. First of all, Andrew says, these teachings are strange. Secondly, Peter questions, would the Savior really have told such things to a woman and kept them from the male disciples? Levi admonishes Peter for contending with a woman as against the adversaries and acknowledges that the Savior loved her more than the other disciples.

"The confrontation of Mary with Peter, a scenario also found in the Gospel of Thomas, Pistis Sophia and the Gospel of the Egyptians, reflects some of the tensions in second-century Christianity. Peter and Andrew represent orthodox positions that deny the validity of esoteric revelation and reject the authority of women to teach. The Gospel of Mary attacks both of these positions head-on through its portrayal of Mary Magdalene. She is the Savior's beloved, possessed of knowledge and teaching superior to that of the public apostolic tradition. Her superiority is based on vision and private revelation and is demonstrated in her capacity to strengthen the wavering disciples and turn them toward the Good."

Those who are interested in learning more about the lost gospels discovered in Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt in 1945 may read "The Gnostic Gospels" by Elaine Pagels, Ph.D., published by Random House, Inc., New York, 1979, in addition to The Nag Hammadi Library edited by James M. Robinson.

*Erratum: The color of the sixth chakra located between the eyebrows is indigo, not violet as pointed. Our mistake.*

*Note: Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City. Tel. nos. 810-7245 or 892-6806 or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my DZMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.*

> The lost Gospel portrays Christ's beloved as possessing superior knowledge based on vision and private revelation

# Developing character through sports

MILO Summer Sports Clinic like the Milo Best Center teaches the fundamentals of the country's most popular sport, basketball, to kids in a professional and scientific program, using a systematic approach. Since the center was established in 1978 by former national basketball coach Nic Jorge, it has set the local benchmark in basketball training for young people.

At Milo Best Center, children are immersed in sports training that emphasizes not only skills development but also positive values such as discipline, sportsmanship, determination, patience and camaraderie. Through constant interaction with their instructors and peers, children will become better equipped to interact with persons of varying backgrounds.

Apart from the health benefits of taking up a sport (especially during the early growth and developmental stages), kids will be exposed to a competitive environment as they join the games organized by Milo Best Center. Learning how to handle the pressures of competition with composure further develops their character.

Through involvement in sports, children will learn the importance of "people" skills that will benefit them in later years. Instructors at Milo Best Center recognize that they play an integral role in developing kids in terms of shaping and molding how they behave. Having a considerable influence on the students' motivation, mindset and behavior, the coaches at Milo Best don't emphasize winning as the primary goal, which can promote dishonesty and selfishness. Instead, they focus more on personal improvement and the mastery of tasks and skills, both off and on the court.

The Milo Best Center encourages a healthy attitude toward competition, inculcating self-discipline among kids that perhaps they may not be as conscious about at home or in school, and introducing them to the mechanisms of good teamwork. By respecting themselves and others, your child will be exposed to positive values—including hard work, persistence and humility—that they learn in the program.

By teaching them basketball, Milo Best Center will develop your children's physical fitness, motor skills and overall health, and perhaps more importantly, provide them an environment that will help them to become better individuals.

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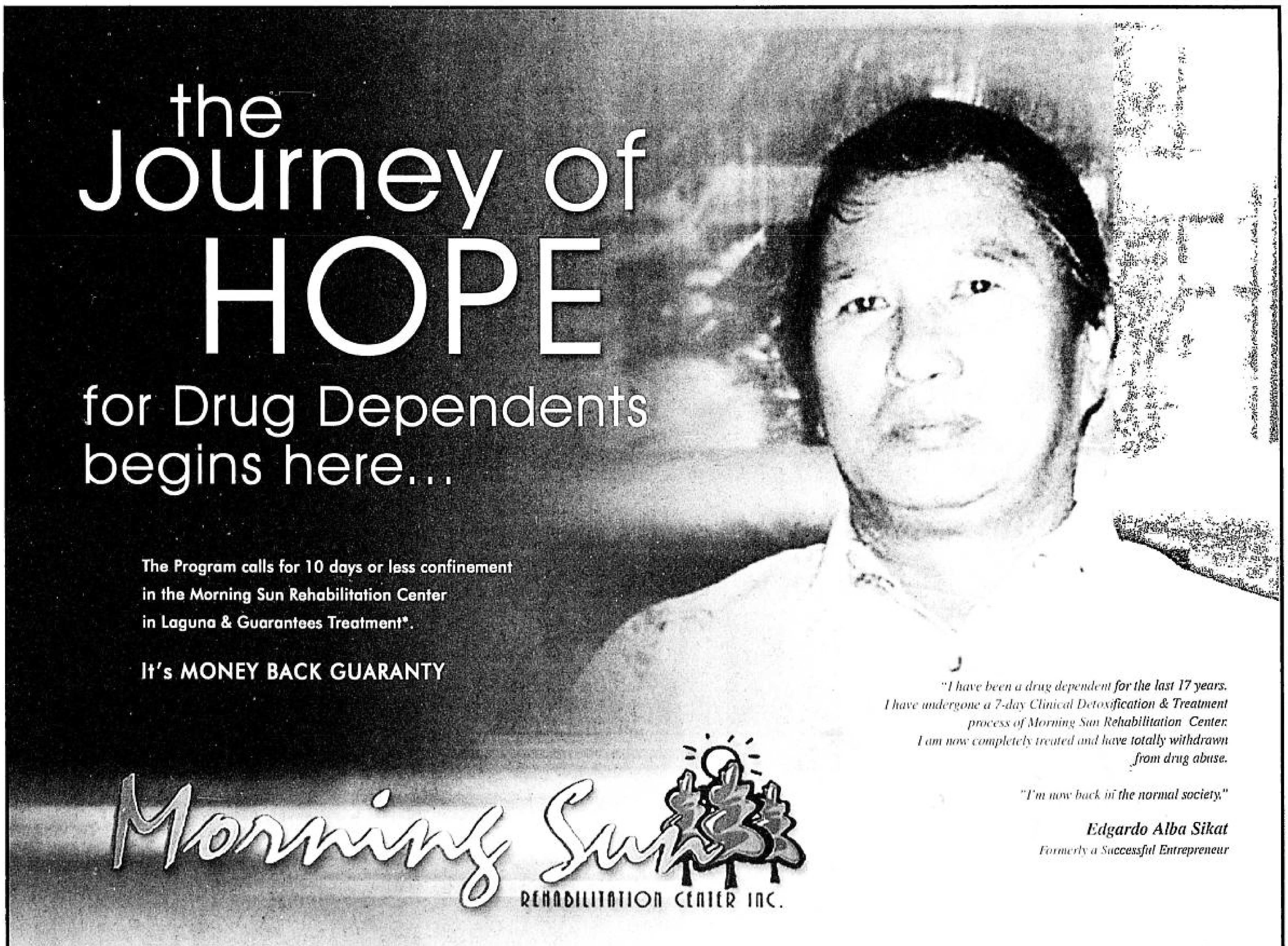

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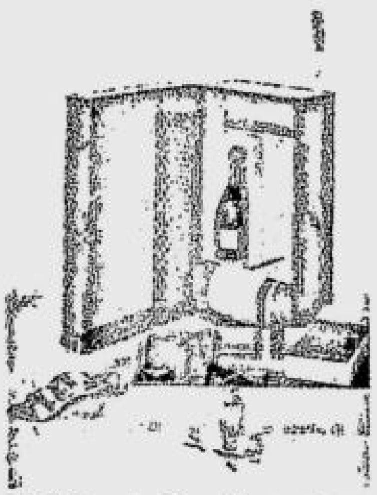
# Oscar-worthy pampering for the stars



ESTÉE Lauder Oscar Spa package

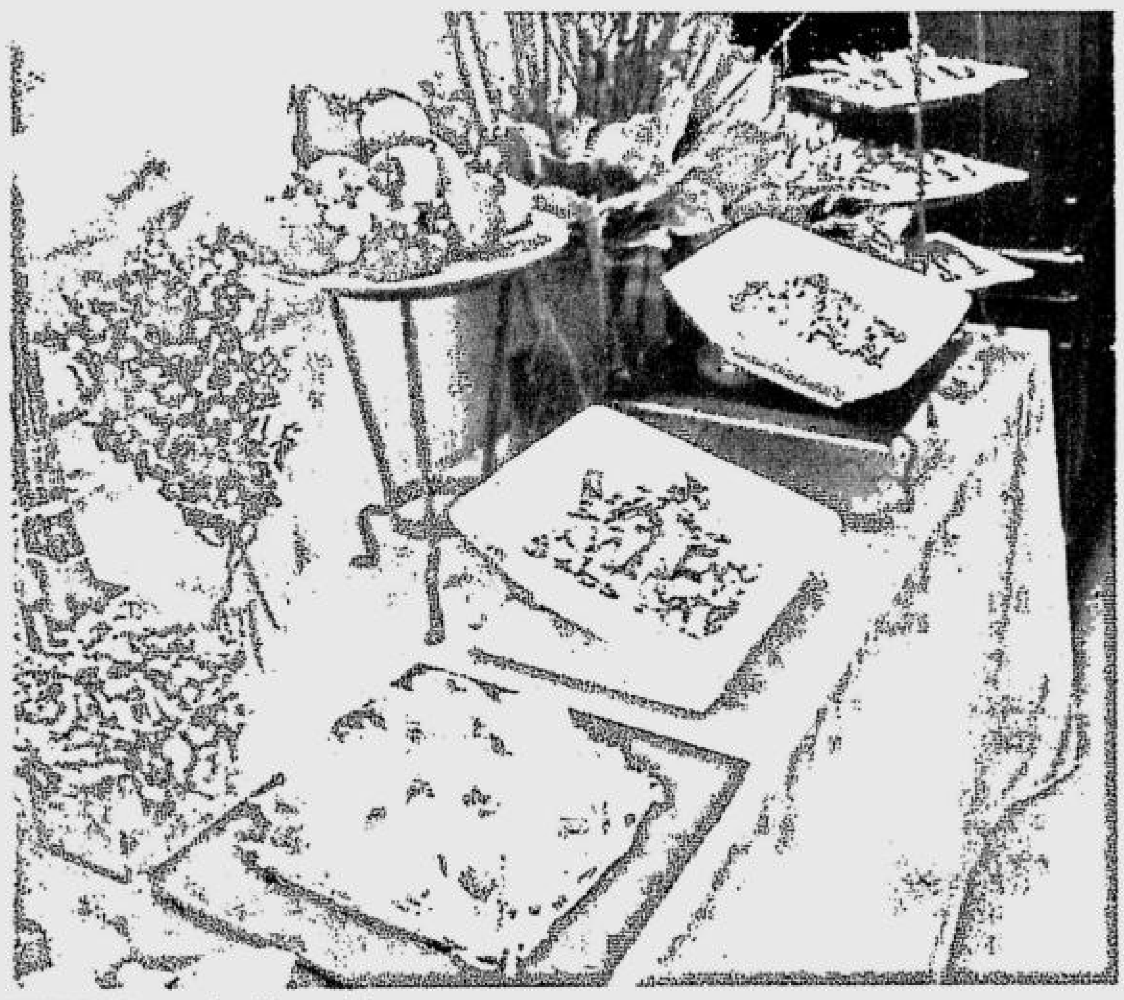
IT is traditional for people to think that only women need pampering. Estée Lauder begs to differ—men need to be pampered, too.

To illustrate: for this year's recently concluded 75th Academy Awards, US cosmetics giant Estée Lauder's dream team of aestheticians, stylists and beauty gurus provided treatments not just to the nominees for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress, but to the deserving Best Actor and Best Supporting Actor nominees as well.

Both male and female honorees were able to relax and prepare for their big night with a customized day of absolute indulgence at the Estée Lauder Spa suite or in the comfort and privacy of their own homes.

Estée Lauder expands its dream team and makes the spa experience available to male stars, too

So, not only Nicole Kidman, Salma Hayek, Diane Lane, Julianne Moore, Renée Zellweger, Kathy Bates, Meryl Streep, Queen Latifah and Catherine Zeta-Jones received the Spa treatment. Adrien Brody, Nicolas Cage, Michael Caine, Daniel Day-Lewis, Jack Nicholson, Chris Cooper, Ed Harris, Paul Newman, John C. Reilly and Christopher Walken got them as well.



THE SPA day was the ultimate in luxury.

Estee Lauder put together a dream team to operate a mobile Oscar Spa aimed at pampering the top stars of the year and eliminating the stress and inconvenience of scheduling numerous beauty and spa appointments during one of the busiest weeks in Hollywood.

The 2003 dream team was made up of stars from the original Oscar Spa as well as a variety of members new to the program, but established in the world of beauty. The specialists included top Hollywood makeup artist Paul Starr, celebrity hairstylist Ray Allington, eyebrow guru Anastasia Soare, Hollywood fashion stylist Phillip Bloch, airbrush tan specialist Layla, and dermatologist Dr. Daniel Taheri.

The nominees developed their own specially tailored spa day—choosing from a complete menu of beauty and spa treatments performed by specialists in each field.

RELAXING foot spa

The Oscar Spa treatments were tailored specifically to the needs of an Academy Award nominee and included the latest spa and skin care breakthroughs. Everything from ultrasonic hydrating facials, airbrush tanning, myontology, microdermabrasion, peels, aroma therapy, hot lava rock massage to manicure, pedicure, waxing, couples treatments, underarm botox, botox facial injections, lymphatic massage therapy, and seaweed masks were offered.

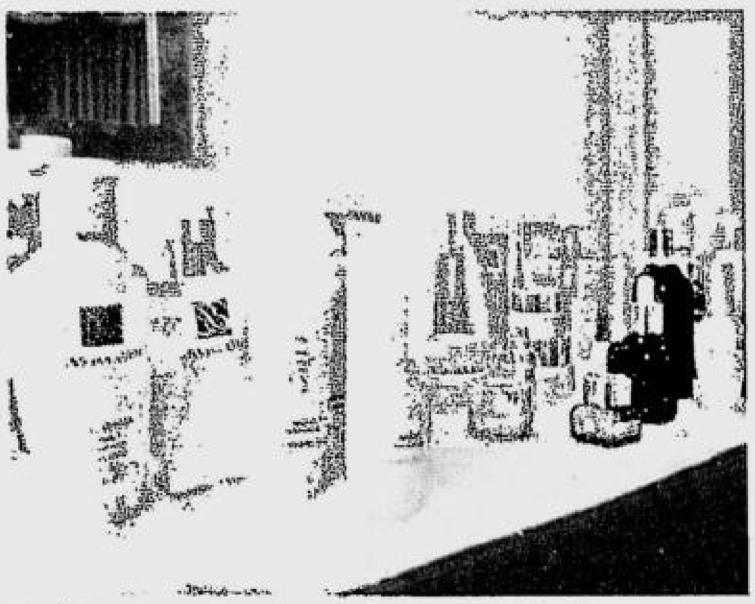
The spa day was the ultimate in luxury as female nominees received specially-designed Manolo Blahnik sandals while male nominees were greeted with Manolo Blahnik men's shoes created specially for the 2003 Estée Lauder Oscar Spa to keep feet pedicure ready.

Each attendee also took home an Estée Lauder product, including the new Red Carpet Red Pure Color Lipstick created for the 2003 Academy Awards and the new Pure Color Lip Vinyl for women, and the complete Estée Lauder Men's Line and new Intuition For Men fragrance for male nominees.

A beach towel from Hermes was provided post-treatment as well as a vintage bottle of La Grande Dame Veuve Clicquot champagne to celebrate the honor of nomination.

All of these gifts, including Estée Lauder's Private Spa Collection, were presented in a Goyard travel case.

With these perks and treatments, it's no wonder everyone looked absolutely gorgeous during Oscar night.



ESTÉE Lauder's new products and private spa collection

THE OSCAR Spa treatments included the latest spa and skincare breakthroughs.

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# Want to lose weight? Get enough sleep

**WELL AND GOOD**

*Tina Juan*

THERE is a good reason we spend one-third of our lives sleeping. Our body is like a battery whose energy is drained during the day and needs recharging at night. Sleep is as vital and necessary to our survival as air, food and water.

If you have ever stayed awake all night cramming during final exam week or have had to deal with a newborn baby, you know the classic symptoms of sleep deprivation—fatigue, drowsiness, an inability to concentrate, moodiness and a feeling like you have cotton inside your head instead of a brain. What you may not realize is that lack of sleep can also make you gain weight.

### Hormones affected by lack of sleep

Scientists are still not exactly sure why lack of sleep can cause weight gain, but they are focusing their investigation on three hormones—leptin, cortisol and growth hormone.

Leptin has been called the "satiety hormone" because it tells you to stop eating when you are full. Low levels can make you eat more food than you need since you don't feel satisfied. Cortisol is a stress hormone that increases your appetite and directs fat to be stored in the abdomen. Growth hormone isn't just to make children grow. In adults, it repairs muscles and regulates muscle-to-fat ratio. This is the stuff that helps make your muscles—depending on the kind of workout you are doing—stronger, harder, firmer and bigger.

### While you were sleeping . . .

You might think nothing happens while you are asleep. But actually your body and brain are busy doing repair and maintenance work. Sleep comes in five stages which last for about 90 minutes and is repeated in four to five cycles a night. The first four stages are non-REM sleep and the fifth stage is REM sleep.

REM or rapid eye movement sleep is when you dream. Your eyes move rapidly back and forth while you have visual dreams. Your muscles are paralyzed though they may twitch, and your blood pressure, heart rate and breathing are erratic. The brain is very active. Scientists believe this is a time of mental renewal when your mind reorganizes itself, throwing out unnecessary pieces of information and re-filing what is left to make sense the next day.

Non-REM sleep is when you are physically restored. Stage one is a state of drowsiness. Stage two is light sleep while stages three and four are deep sleep. These last two stages are also called slow-wave sleep because your brain waves are at their slowest. During deep sleep, your body repairs tissues, including the skin. Since older people spend only five percent of the night in deep sleep, this may partly explain why the skin ages. Growth hormone production reaches its peak during deep sleep, specifically between midnight and 2 a.m.

### Less sleep, more calories

A 1999 University of Chicago study that was published in "The Lancet" found that lean young men who slept four hours a day for 16 days had decreased levels of leptin and increased levels of cortisol. These hormonal changes made them so hungry that they consumed 1,000 extra calories a day. Not only that. Head researcher Eve Van Cauter discovered that their insulin and blood sugar levels resembled those of pre-diabetics, a condition called "impaired glucose tolerance." This means that their sleep-deprived bodies were not processing carbohydrates properly. The participants' blood chemistry returned to normal after the experiment, when they resumed their regular sleeping patterns. But in people who are chronically sleep-deprived, this pre-diabetic state could trigger Type-2 diabetes and obesity later on in life.

> On top of fatigue, moodiness and other ill effects, lack of sleep may also lead to weight gain

### Deep sleep and the middle-age bulge

Van Cauter did another study that was published in the 2000 Journal of the American Medical Association. This time she focused on middle-aged men. Typically, men get less deep sleep as they get older. Women get more deep sleep than men until after menopause when their sleep patterns become similar. Two-thirds of a man's growth hormone production occurs during deep sleep, while for women it's only one-third. Growth hormone production reaches its peak during deep sleep so less time spent in deep sleep means less growth hormone. The result? A harder time losing weight, more fat in the abdominal area, and less muscle mass and strength.

More bad news. Van Cauter's study found that although young and middle-aged men sleep the same number of hours, they are not

WANT/ D4

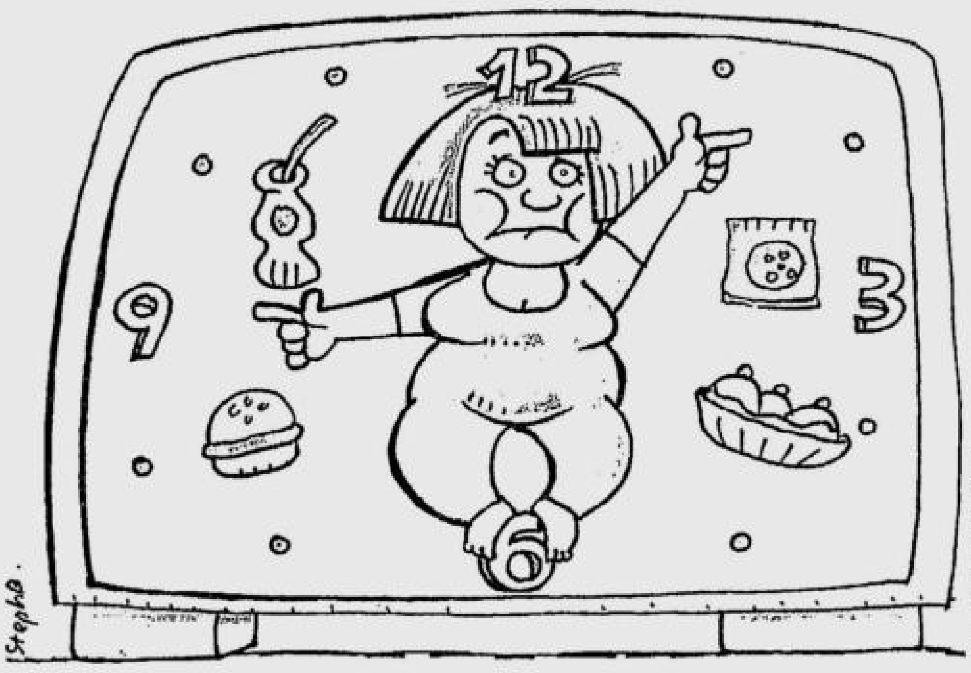

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

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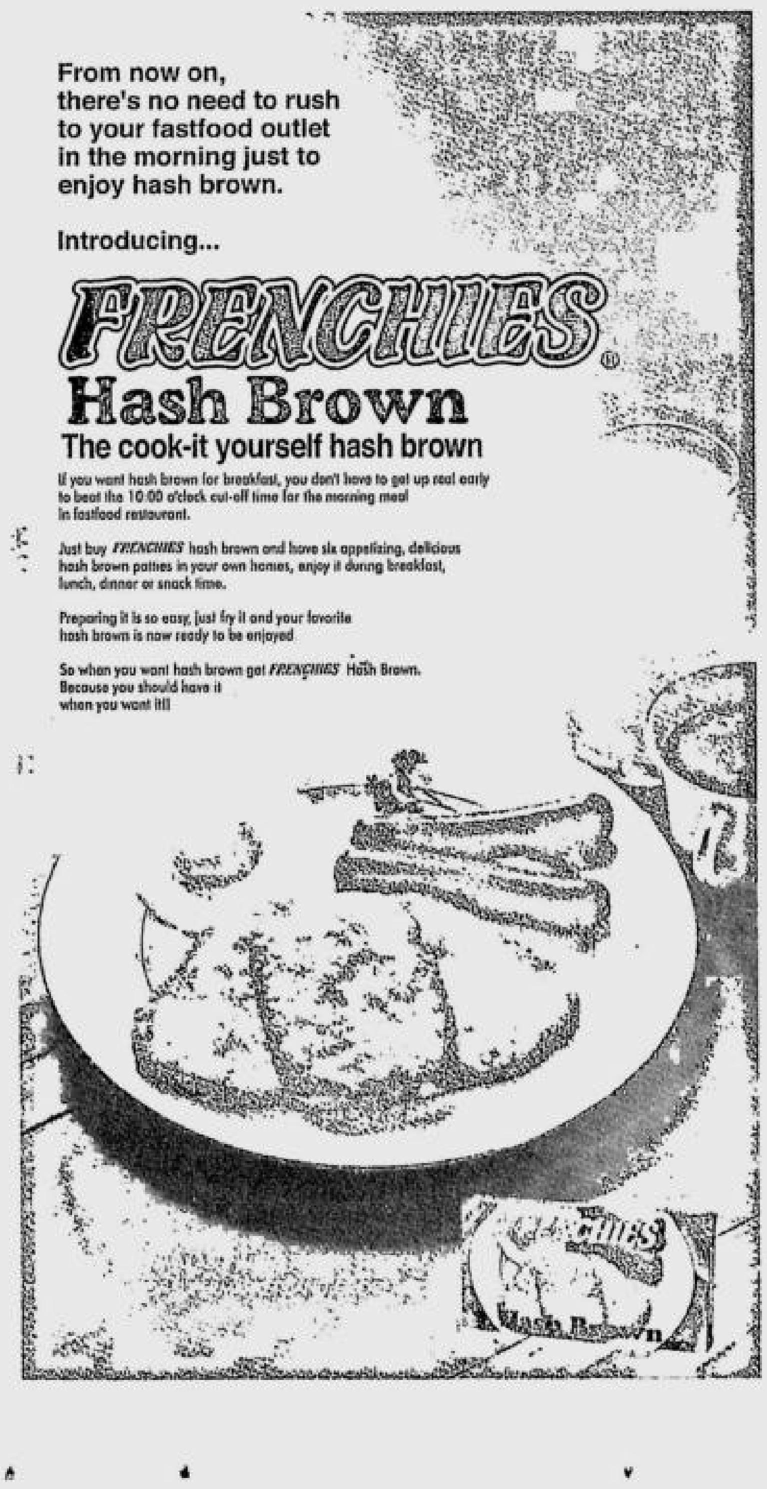
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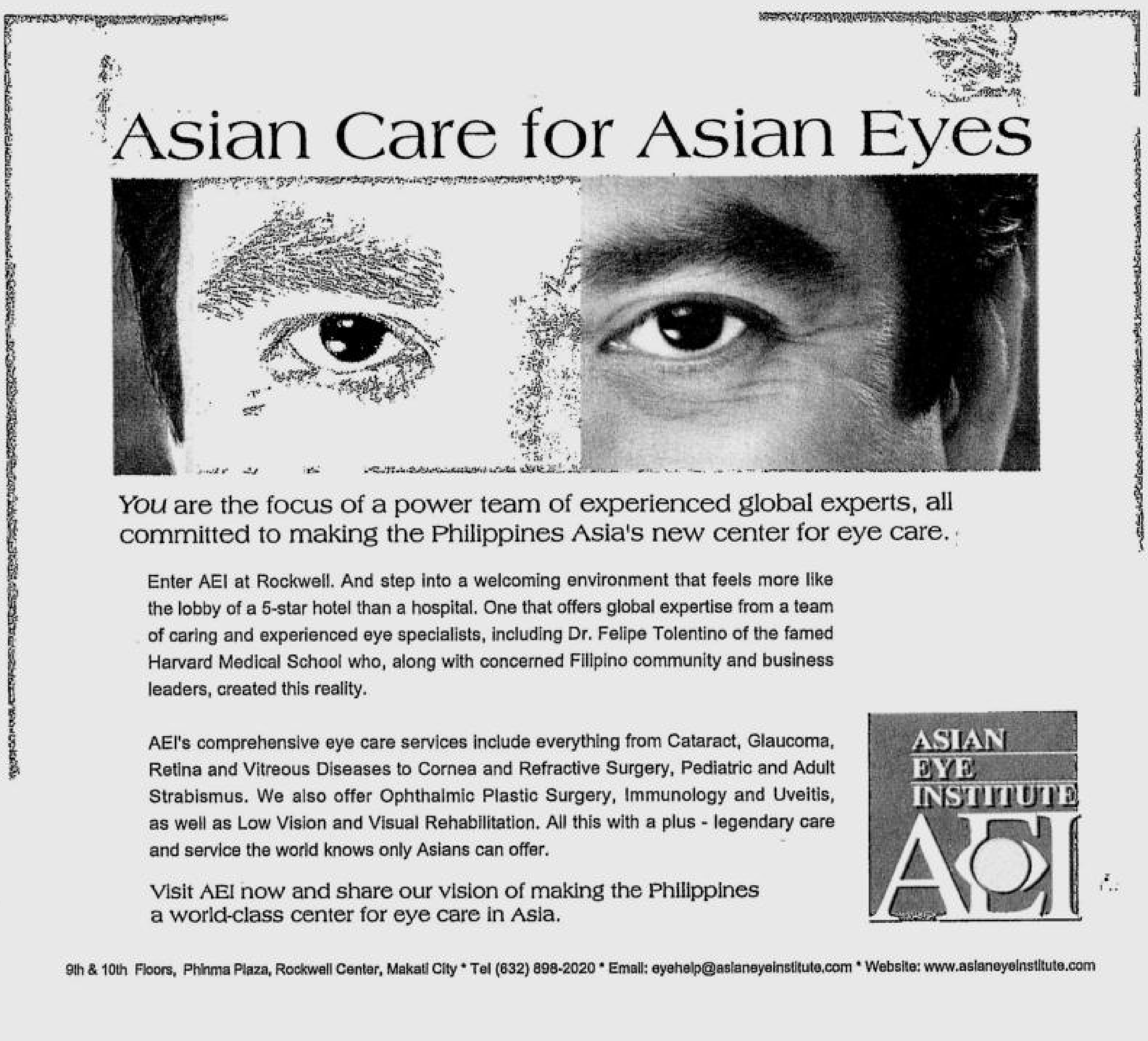
Preparing it is so easy, just fry it and your favorite hash brown is now ready to be enjoyed.
So when you want hash brown get FRENCHIES Hash Brown. Because you should have it when you want it!!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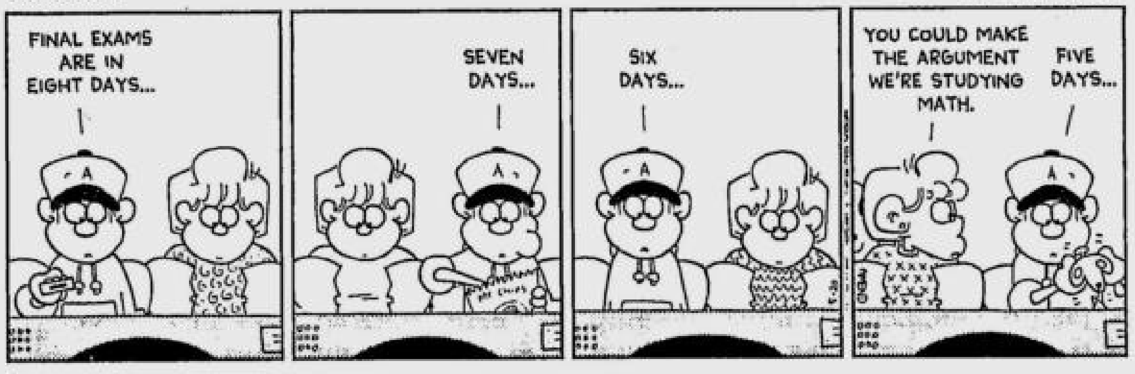
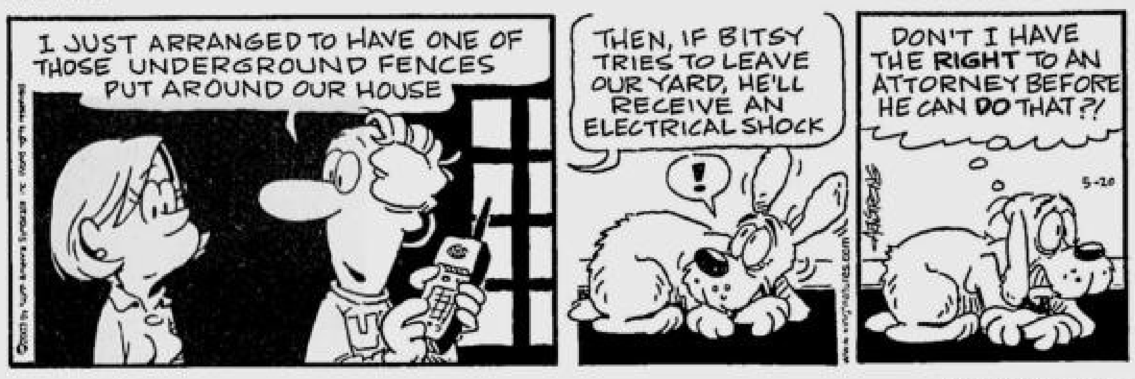
## FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


FINAL EXAMS ARE IN EIGHT DAYS...
SEVEN DAYS...
SIX DAYS...
YOU COULD MAKE THE ARGUMENT WE'RE STUDYING MATH.
FIVE DAYS...

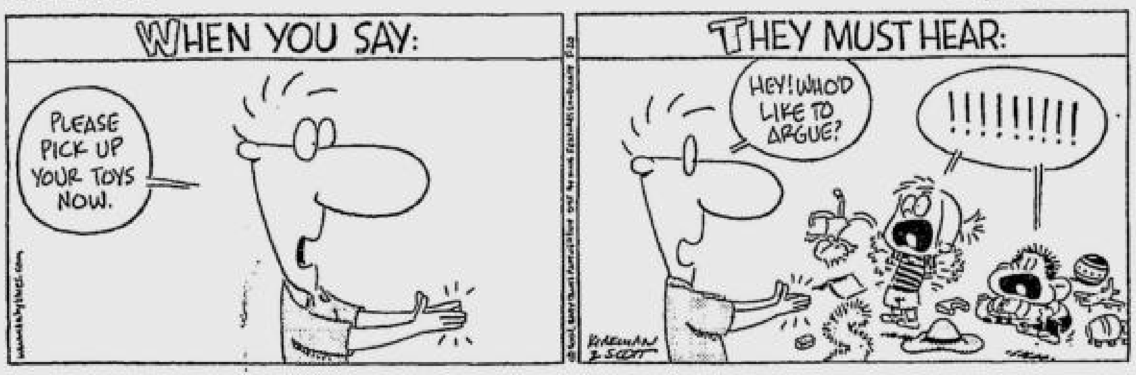
## MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I JUST ARRANGED TO HAVE ONE OF THOSE UNDERGROUND FENCES PUT AROUND OUR HOUSE
THEN, IF BITSY TRIES TO LEAVE OUR YARD, HE'LL RECEIVE AN ELECTRICAL SHOCK
!
DON'T I HAVE THE RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY BEFORE HE CAN DO THAT?!
5-20

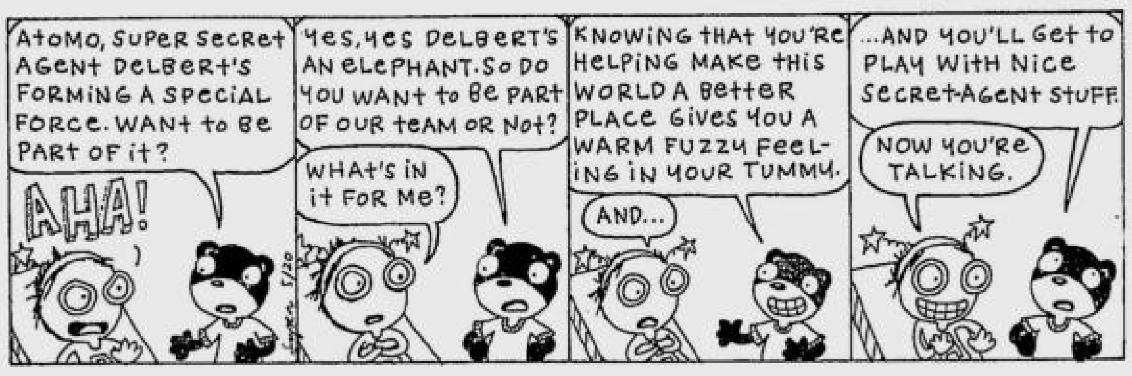
## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHEN YOU SAY:
PLEASE PICK UP YOUR TOYS NOW.
THEY MUST HEAR:
HEY! WHO'D LIKE TO ARGUE?
!!!!!!!!!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

## ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Atomo, Super Secret Agent Delbert's Forming A Special Force. Want to be Part of it?
AHA!
Yes, yes Delbert's an elephant. So do you want to be part of our team or not?
What's in it for me?
Knowing that you're helping make this world a better place gives you a warm fuzzy feeling in your tummy.
And...
...And you'll get to play with nice secret-agent stuff.
Now you're talking.

## HOROSCOPE

### BY FRANCIS DRAKE

**YOU BORN TODAY:** You are original, innovative and highly expressive. Your communication skills are excellent. You are bold and modern in all your expressions. You believe in living life fully and passionately. You are enthusiastic, and you have high standards. Important choices will take you in different directions this year.
**Birthdate of:** Cher, actress/singer; Jimmy Stewart, actor; Dave Thomas, comedian.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** Starting today, your progress will greatly improve with respect to looking for a job, thinking about how to earn money and doing all financial transactions in general. Think positively!

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** For some weeks now, delays, confusion and dealings with people from your past made you feel you were stuck in quicksand. All that is over now. It's all systems go.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** All your conversations and dealings with the government or large institutions will proceed with more efficiency starting today. Forget what is cooking on the back burner. Plan ahead!

**CANCER: (June 21 to July 22):** Discussions with old friends make you think about decisions you've made and how they lead to different roads and paths. This galvanizes you into action to pursue new goals.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** Delays with career options and dealings with parents and VIPs are now things of the past. Make plans to move forward with confidence.

**VIRGO: (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** Starting today, your life will run much more easily. Your ruler, Mercury, has been retrograde for weeks now, causing you transportation delays and minor obstacles.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** Your ability to fund raise, solicit loans and get help from others improves enormously now. Don't be afraid to ask for what you want. You just might get it!

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** Ex-partners, ex-spouses and friends from the past have given you something to think about in the past month or so. (When all is said and done, aren't you glad you're you?)

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** Mixed-up communications, confused messages and delays at work have been a drag. This negative influence is gone now! You can relax and count on more efficiency in your job.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** When you run into old flames, your stomach sometimes might do a flip-flop. However, because you have done your best—which is all you can do—you have nothing to hide now. (Head up, eyes straight ahead.)

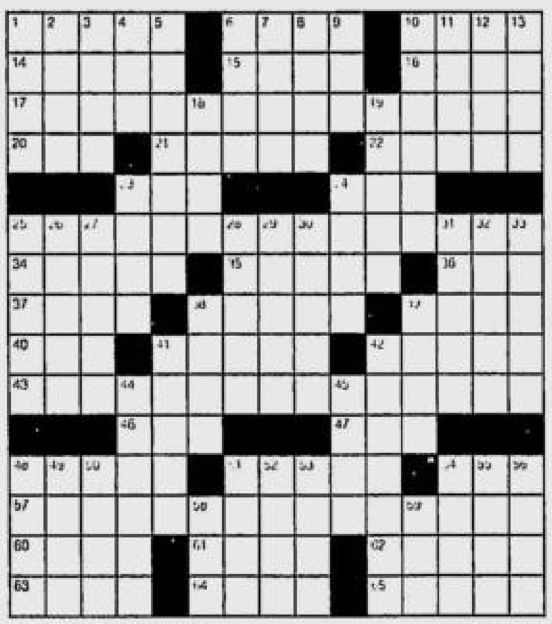
**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** Now is the time to think ahead about how to make improvements at home. Talk to family members and get their input. You want to make where you live more cozy and attractive.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Transportation delays and canceled trips have dogged your footsteps in the past month or so. Now you can expect everything to run more smoothly. Relax.

## DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Shut out
6 Heavyweight champion of 1934
10 Think-tank product
14 Texas shrine
15 Eight: It.
16 Temporary calm
17 I voted for the other guy
20 Conclusion
21 Clowns
22 Remove soap
23 Former power grp.
24 __ Aviv-Jaffa
25 I'll pay for these
34 Rajahs' wives
35 Monsoons
36 Adjective-forming suffix
37 Colonial cuckoos
38 Japanese mercenary
39 Letters for 521
40 24-hr. info stn.
41 Grassy plain
42 __ du seigneur
43 I can do this
46 Some NFL linemen
47 Swiss peak
48 Small stream
51 Arm bones
54 That's nasty!
57 I won't fail
60 Put in order
61 Antiaircraft fire
62 Consumer
63 Ring rulings, briefly
64 Country way
65 Mindless worker

DOWN
1 Miami's county
2 Carolina college
3 Musical group
4 Qty.
5 Bank-heist crew
6 Ruth's husband
7 Start of a sphere
8 Summers on the Somme
9 French king
10 Philippines port
11 Nora of "SNL"
12 Shade trees
13 Toward shelter
18 Daffy
19 Shock or lock
23 Flea market caveat
24 Actress Yothers
25 Stretch of land
26 Barbera's partner
27 One way to do a crossword
28 Bathsheba's husband
29 Granny
30 French mustard
31 Cynthia of "Sex and the City"
32 Saying
33 Upper crust
38 World Series precursor: abbr.
39 Hit the dirt
41 "Taxi" mechanic
42 Removed from text
44 Puts up
45 Star of "Misery"
48 Saclike structure
49 Castling piece
50 New currency
51 Bruins sch.
52 Cash advance
53 Microwave?
54 Do-others separator
55 Feds
56 In this place
58 Org. of Jaguars and Panthers
59 Rowboat need



By Gerald R. Ferguson
Portland, OR

5/20/03

Monday's Puzzle Solved

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | O | M | B | S | ■ | A | R | A | B | ■ | V | O | T | E |
| A | L | E | R | T | ■ | M | A | L | I | ■ | A | B | E | T |
| C | I | L | I | A | ■ | I | N | C | A | ■ | L | E | A | R |
| ■ | O | L | D | K | I | N | G | O | F | R | H | Y | M | E |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | A | E | S | ■ | ■ | A | R | E | A | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| K | A | R | L | ■ | S | P | A | ■ | A | L | L | O | T | S |
| I | R | E | ■ | B | E | A | N | O | ■ | E | L | I | O | T |
| V | O | C | A | L | I | S | T | N | A | T | A | L | I | E |
| A | M | O | C | O | ■ | T | I | T | U | S | ■ | E | L | L |
| S | A | N | C | T | A | ■ | C | O | D | ■ | F | R | E | E |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | E | T | N | A | ■ | ■ | I | C | E | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| C | O | M | P | O | S | E | R | P | O | R | T | E | R | ■ |
| A | D | I | T | ■ | A | G | E | E | ■ | A | T | L | A | S |
| L | O | R | E | ■ | T | I | N | T | ■ | B | L | A | I | R |
| F | R | E | D | ■ | E | S | T | E | ■ | S | E | N | N | A |

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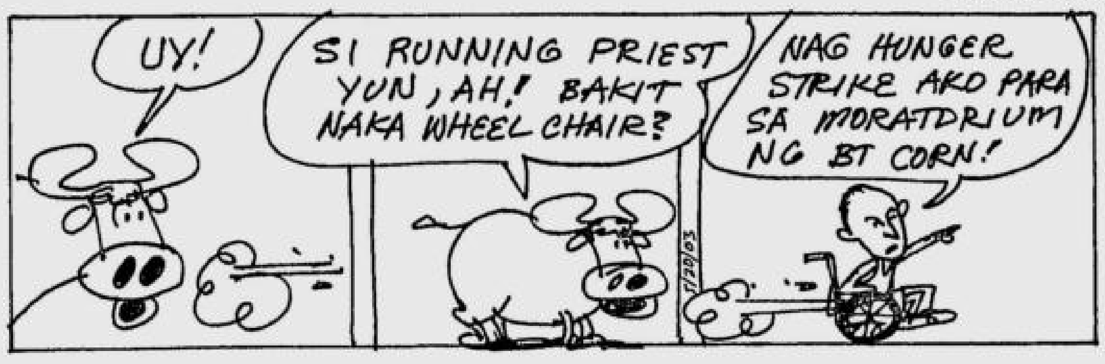
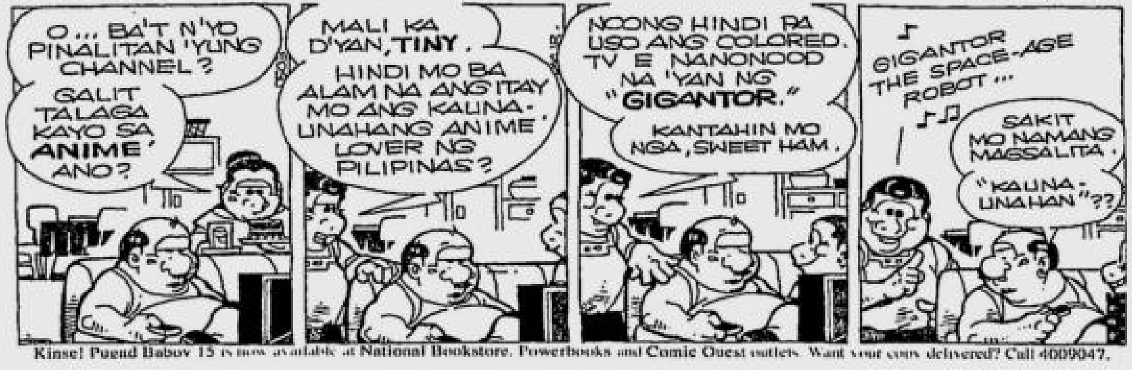
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


UY!
SI RUNNING PRIEST YUN, AH! BAKIT NAKA WHEEL CHAIR?
NAG HUNGER STRIKE AKO PARA SA MORATORIUM NG BT CORN!
5/20/03

## PUGAD BABOY

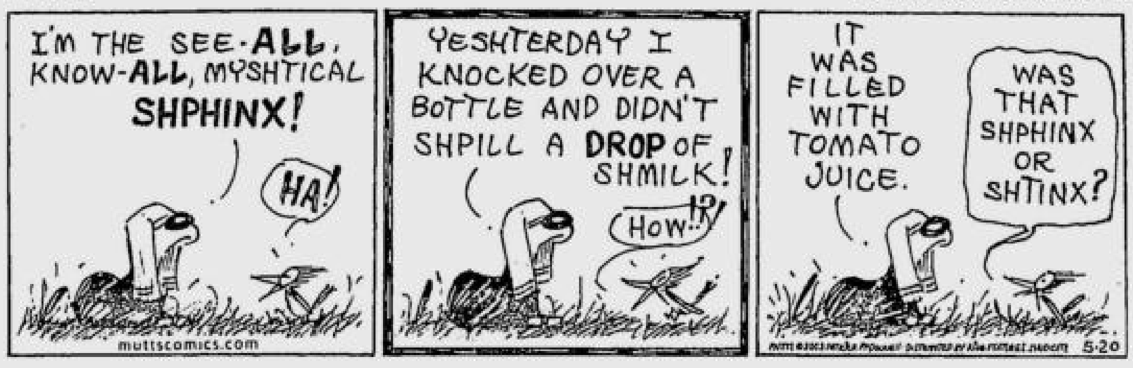
BY P.M. JUNIOR


O... BA'T N'YO PINALITAN 'YUNG CHANNEL?
GALIT TALAGA KAYO SA ANIME' ANO?
MALI KA D'YAN, TINY.
HINDI MO BA ALAM NA ANG ITAY MO ANG KAUNA-UNAHANG ANIME LOVER NG PILIPINAS?
NOONG HINDI PA USO ANG COLORED TV E NANONOOD NA 'YAN NG "GIGANTOR."
KANTAHIN MO NGA, SWEET HAM.
GIGANTOR THE SPACE-AGE ROBOT...
SAKIT MO NAMANG MAGSALITA.
"KAUNA-UNAHAN"??

Kinse! Pugad Baboy 15 is now available at National Bookstore, Powerbooks and Comic Quest outlets. Want your copy delivered? Call 4009047.

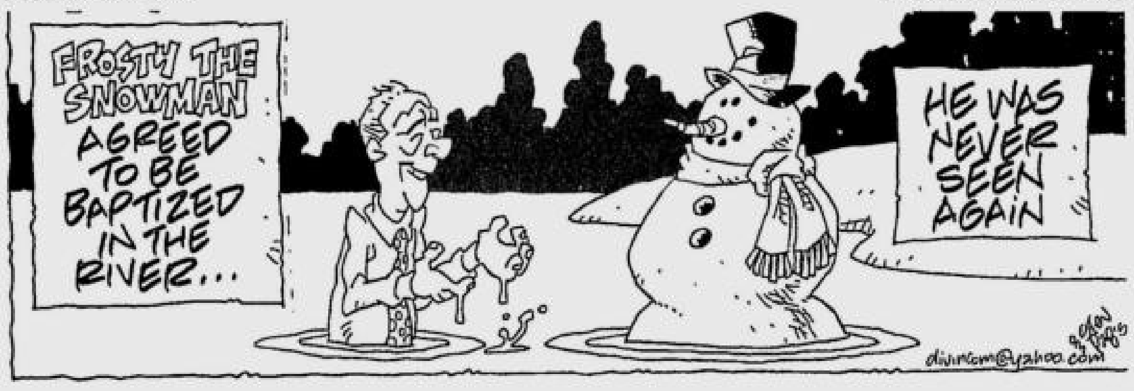
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M THE SEE-ALL, KNOW-ALL, MYSHTICAL SHPHINX!
HA!
YESHTERDAY I KNOCKED OVER A BOTTLE AND DIDN'T SHPILL A DROP OF SHMILK!
HOW!?
IT WAS FILLED WITH TOMATO JUICE.
WAS THAT SHPHINX OR SHTINX?
mutts comics.com
5-20

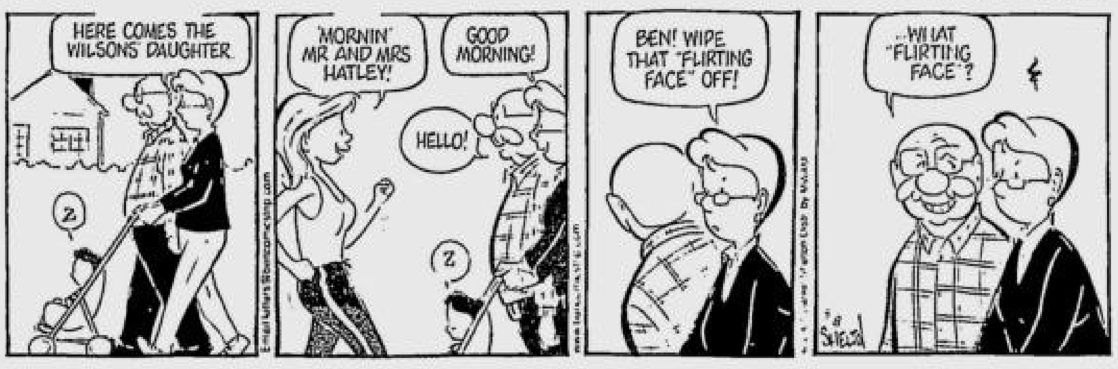
## DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


FROSTY THE SNOWMAN AGREED TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE RIVER...
HE WAS NEVER SEEN AGAIN
divincom@yahoo.com

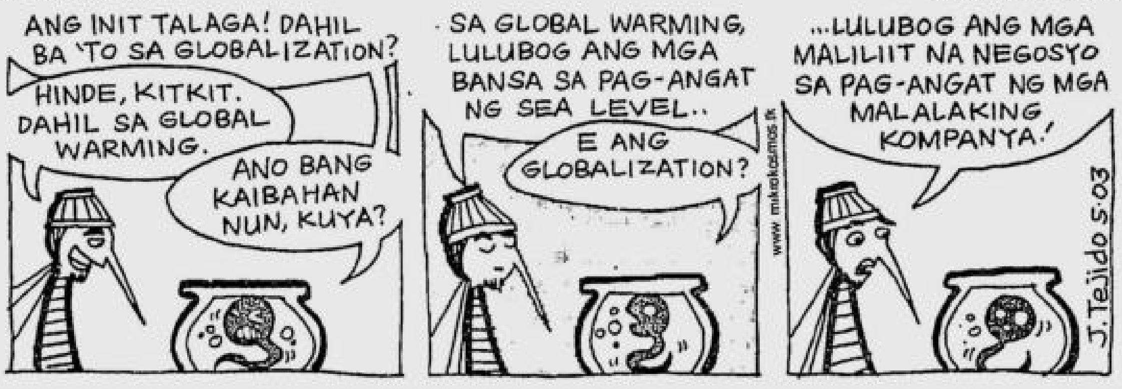
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE COMES THE WILSONS' DAUGHTER.
'MORNIN' MR AND MRS HATLEY!
GOOD MORNING!
HELLO!
BEN! WIPE THAT "FLIRTING FACE" OFF!
...WHAT "FLIRTING FACE"?

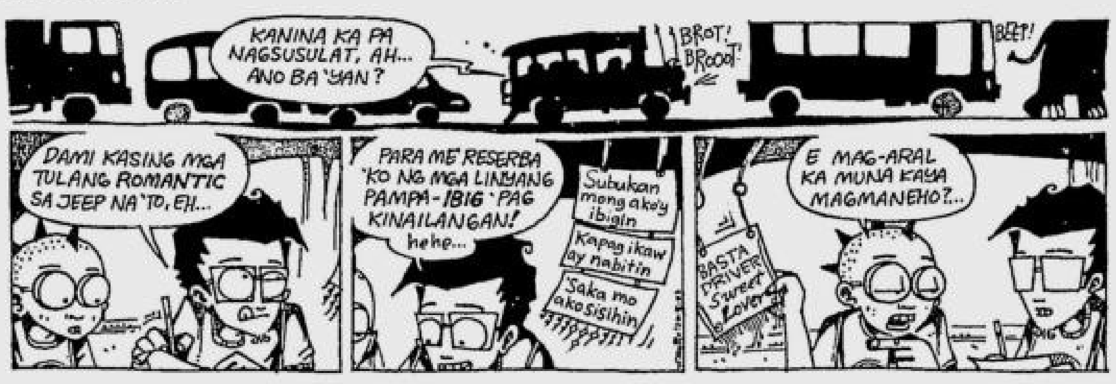
## MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG INIT TALAGA! DAHIL BA 'TO SA GLOBALIZATION?
HINDE, KITKIT. DAHIL SA GLOBAL WARMING.
ANO BANG KAIBAHAN NUN, KUYA?
SA GLOBAL WARMING, LULUBOG ANG MGA BANSA SA PAG-ANGAT NG SEA LEVEL..
E ANG GLOBALIZATION?
...LULUBOG ANG MGA MALILIIT NA NEGOSYO SA PAG-ANGAT NG MGA MALALAKING KOMPANYA!
www.mikrokosmos.tk
J. Tejido 5.03

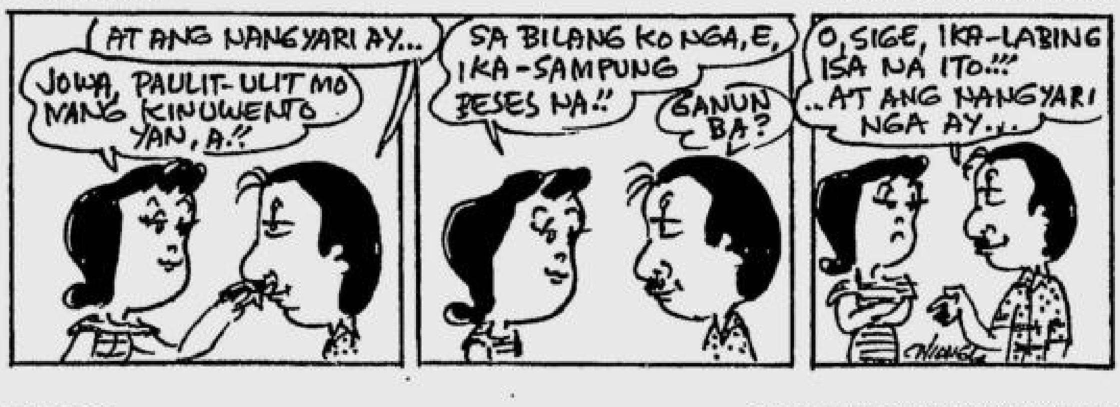
## KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KANINA KA PA NAGSUSULAT, AH... ANO BA 'YAN?
BROT! BROOT!
BEEP!
DAMI KASING MGA TULANG ROMANTIC SA JEEP NA 'TO, EH...
PARA ME' RESERBA 'KO NG MGA LINYANG PAMPA-IBIG 'PAG KINAILANGAN! hehe...
Subukan mong akoy ibigin
Kapag ikaw ay nabitin
Saka mo akosisihin
BASTA DRIVER Sweet Lover
E MAG-ARAL KA MUNA KAYA MAGMANEHO?..

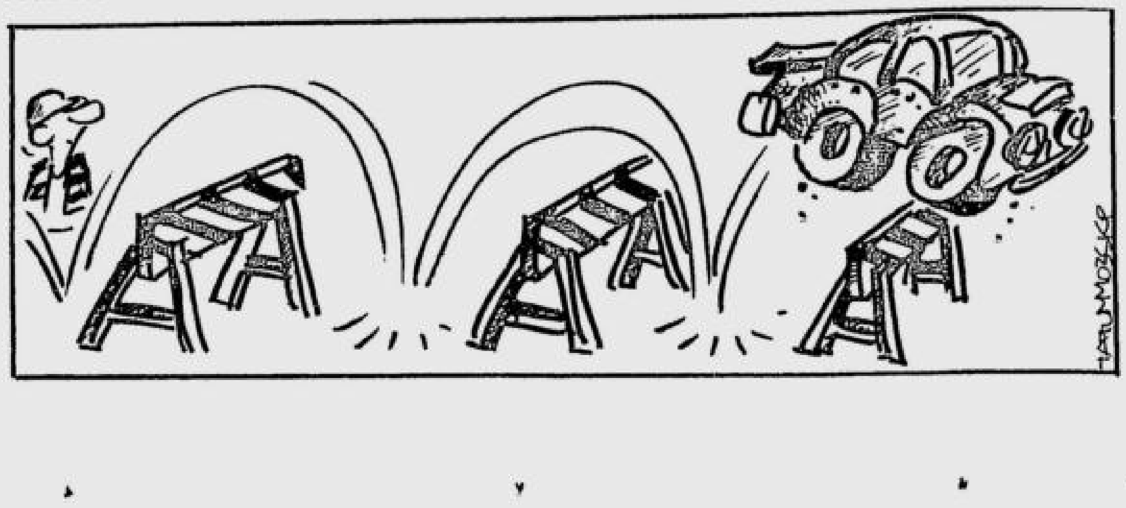
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

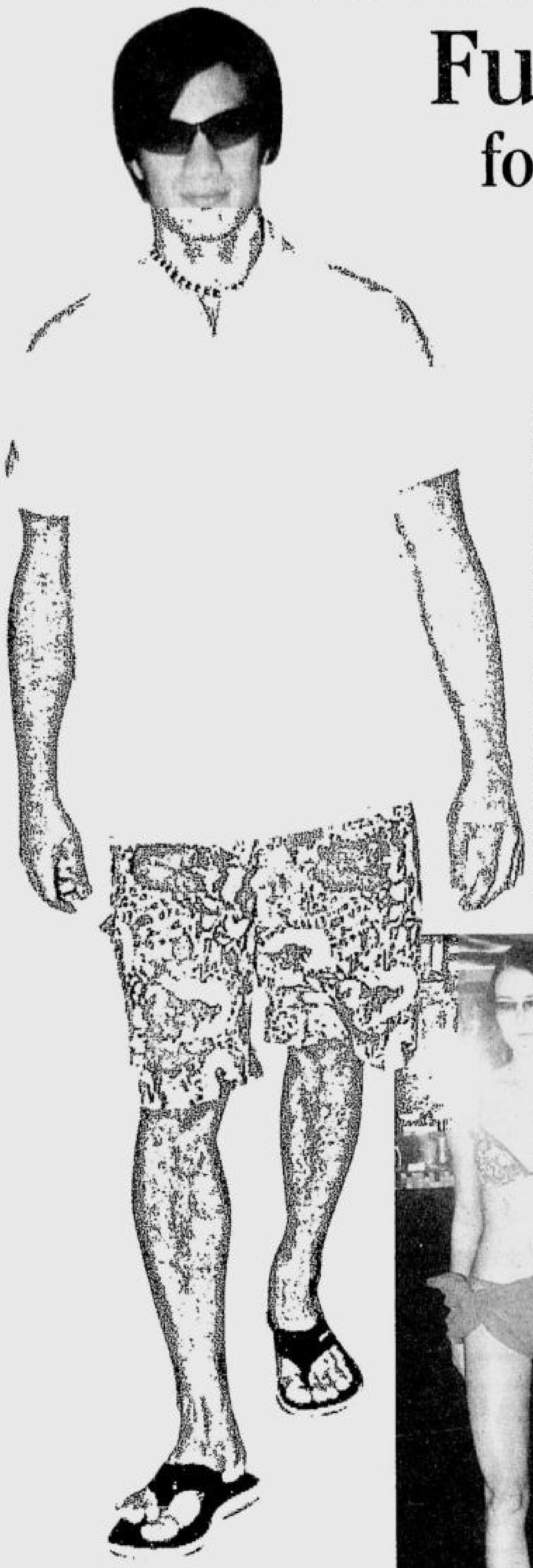

AT ANG NANGYARI AY...
JOWA, PAULIT-ULIT MO NANG KINUWENTO YAN, A.!!
SA BILANG KO NGA, E, IKA-SAMPUNG BESES NA.!!
GANUN BA?
O, SIGE, IKA-LABING ISA NA ITO.!!!
..AT ANG NANGYARI NGA AY...

## TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



# Full speed ahead for total immersion swimming program



**GARY** in linen Lounge Shirt and Buddha Print Watershorts

ABS-CBN Publishing and Speedo recently organized Full Speedo Ahead—a Total Immersion Swimming program at Temple Bar and Restaurant, Greenbelt 2, Makati.

Highlighting the event was a fashion show featuring Speedo's Spring/Summer 2003 collection inspired by floral, Oriental and pop-art styles—an eastern influence with a western twist.

Whether you are new to swimming or have years of experience, Total Immersion can provide you with all the tools you need to become the best swimmer you can be. Swimmers have experienced improvement in their stroke efficiency by 20 percent, concentrating on the three essential skills of fishlike swimming. Swimming "Downhill," Swimming "Taller" and "Skating" on Your Scale are skills that do not require experience, fitness, youth or power.

Ria Mackay, swim coach, US-certified by Terry Laughlin, in association with Speedo and ABS-CBN Publishing, launched the Total Immersion program in the Philippines this summer 2003. Ria teaches fishlike swimming skills to elite triathletes, age-group masters, fitness swimmers and beginners of all ages and abilities.

Speedo is committed to help promote the sport of swimming to health-conscious consumers as a low-impact, high aerobic value regime in their lifestyle.

Speedo has been synonymous with swimming and water sports since 1928. The credibility of the brand is underpinned by leading-edge design, state-of-the-art technological development and innovative products.

**ROISIN** in the Swirl Underwired Triangle Bikini and Macy Thong Slippers

**COREY** sports the Superfly Watershorts that incorporates a neoprene waistband for optimum fit.

**RAZELL** sports the Atmosphere Powerback.

**RAZELL** in the Braid Triangle Bikini.

## Get your hands on a healthy habit

THE ALCOGEL habit is one habit you wouldn't mind picking up, and soon. Exclusively manufactured by Scentral Laboratories for Bench, the country's leading apparel and lifestyle brand, Alcogel is an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that kills germs and bacteria more effectively than your everyday soap.

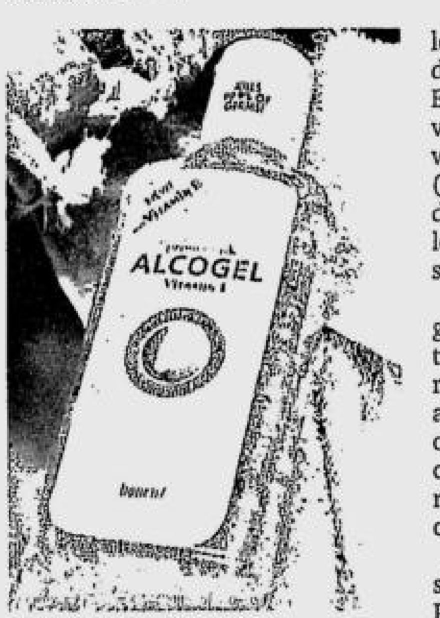
Just apply a small amount on your hands, then rub lightly until your skin absorbs the formulation and voile! You're ready to reach out and touch somebody.

With Alcogel, your hands are kept 99.9 percent germ-free. It contains ethyl alcohol, a highly effective anti-microbial agent that provides broad-spectrum anti-microbial activity against bacteria, including antibiotic-resistant organisms. Also, the formulation includes isopropyl alcohol and benzalkonium chloride, which are known to be good and reliable disinfectants for that all-around germ-killing action.

Formulated with moisturizers, Alcogel increases skin hydration unlike plain alcohol and leaves no sticky or tacky residue. It has a clean citrusy fragrance.

Despite its alcohol content, Alcogel does not dry out the skin. It is formulated with emollients to help condition the skin and reduce dryness and irritation. While it's true that in its pure state alcohol is drying, this drying effect is caused by the loss of natural oils when alcohol is wiped off of the skin's surface. Since instant hand sanitizers are not wiped off, skin oils are not removed. Alcogel is dermatologically tested to be mild and gentle on the skin.

KILLS 99.9% OF GERMS!
cleanwipes
ANTIBACTERIAL WET TISSUE
Cleanses and refreshes skin
10 MOIST TOWELETTES
ALCOGEL



Variations include Classic Alcogel (P19/50ml; P29/100ml), which leaves a fresh clean scent without drying the skin; Alcogel with Vitamin E (P28/50ml; P45/100ml) that prevents skin cell damage working from within; and Alcogel with Aloe (P24/50ml; P39/100ml), which conditions and cleanses the skin and leaves it soft, smooth and clean-smelling.

A perfect complementary to Alcogel is the Alcogel Cleanwipes. An anti-bacterial wet tissue, it offers quick relief from dirt and grime anytime, anywhere. As its name suggests, you only have to wipe it onto your hands or whatever body part you wish to be rid of dust, and you're all fresh and cleaned up in a second.

Alcogel Cleanwipes come in 20 sheets per pack and is available at P25.

Alcogel and Alcogel Cleanwipes are available at all Bench stores nationwide. It is now also available in Hong Kong and Guam and soon in Singapore and China.

## *Quality of life need not suffer with low vision*

YOU are wearing your eyeglasses but you keep bumping into pieces of furniture in your office or at home. More often than not, you have difficulty reading printed materials. Watching TV news is no longer enjoyable since you can hardly see the people on the tube. There is also difficulty in reading street signs. Worse, you have a hard time making out the faces of loved ones and friends.

"These are early warning signs of eye disease, and an early diagnosis increases the chances of treatment and retaining remaining vision," says Dr. Sheila Santos of St. Luke's Medical Center's Vision Rehabilitation Center. There are only a handful of Filipino doctors in this field of low vision rehabilitation, with SLMC leading the way as it launched the Center last year.

Low vision is characterized by a significant reduction of visual function not adequately correctable by standard glasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery. If the normal visual acuity is 20/20, people with low vision have 20/70 or even less. They are considered partially sighted and with time lose their depth perception, which might cause them to trip or fall every now and then. They can experience loss of central vision, impaired peripheral vision, overall blur or at times a combination of all three.

### Causes

Low vision can result from diseases, disorders and injuries of the eye like cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration and retinitis pigmentosa. Older people are at a higher risk since they are predisposed to develop these diseases. In general, low vision primarily affects people in later stages of life and the number will increase as the population ages. But at times, Dr. Santos pointed out, patients as young as four years old have needed help in their pre-school activities. There is also an increasing number of pediatric patients in low vision.

There are changes in the psychological, physical and economic make-up of people with low visions that affect activities of daily living (ADL). Easy tasks like cooking, sewing, reading or even taking leisurely walks become cumbersome. For some, the ability to perform job-related functions gets to be harder.

Dr. Santos recommends that a person take note of the problems experienced as soon as possible. It is imperative to consult an ophthalmologist immediately.

SLMC's Vision Rehabilitation Center teaches patients whose vision cannot be treated by conventional methods to maximize the use of their remaining vision and give them the many practical applications for ADL. Their quality of life need not suffer.

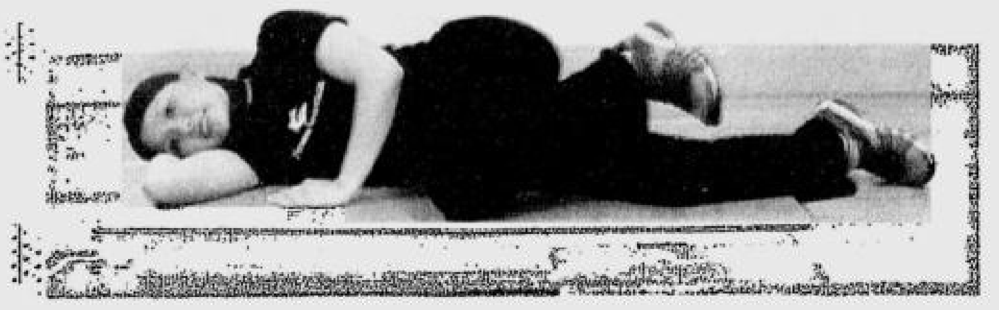
There are about 135 million people worldwide suffering from low vision. Early detection, effective treatments and most importantly, education are the most important things needed in coping with low vision.

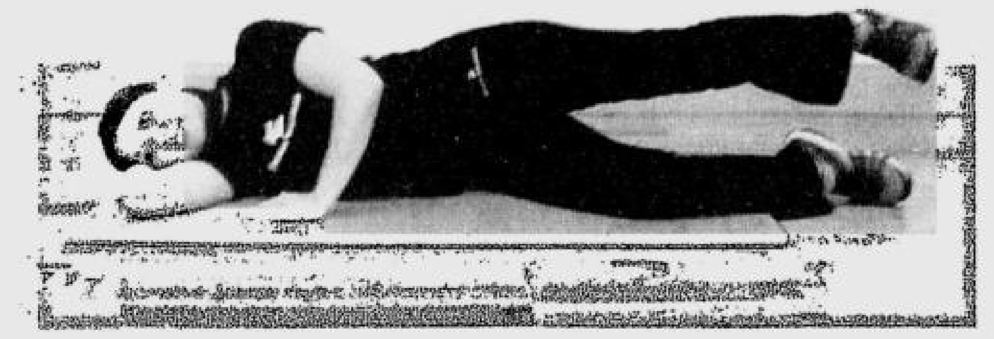
Call 727-5422.

*Dr. Sheila Santos was a fellow on Low Vision Rehabilitation, Helen Keller Eye Foundation, University of Alabama at Birmingham and a much sought after speaker on Low Vision Rehabilitation in the medical and civic circles all over the country.*

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

# *Side leg lift with inward rotation*





FIRMS and tones hip muscles

**Equipment:**
Exercise mat and ankle weights (optional)

**Exercise technique:**

1. Lie on your side with one arm under your head, the other arm on the floor for balance, and both knees bent in a 45-degree angle.
2. Inwardly rotate your top leg so the knee is almost touching the floor and the sole of your foot is facing the ceiling.
3. Straighten your leg in line with your torso and higher than hip level.
4. Do the desired number of repetitions then do the other side.

**Performance tips**

1. Avoid pulling your knee towards your chest. To make sure that you are doing it right, your knee should be almost touching the floor and your foot pointing to the ceiling.
2. Avoid using jerky sudden movements. Use slow deliberate moves so the hip muscles have to work harder.

**Repetitions**
Do 15-20 repetitions per side.

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# Want to lose weight?

From page D1

getting the same amount of deep sleep. Men who are 25 years old and below get 20 percent deep sleep while those between 25 and 35 years get 12 percent. After age 35, it's 5 percent or less.

Van Cauter found that because of the decline in deep sleep, a 45-year-old man's growth hormone production has dropped by 75 percent. Previously, scientists thought this only occurred when men reached the age of 60. This may explain why even very fit middle-aged men complain that they have stubborn love-handles they can't get rid of.

## Fewer dreams can increase abdominal fat

Even more bad news. As we age, we spend less time in REM or dream sleep. This is associated with an increase of cortisol during the night time. Cortisol is also known as the alertness hormone. It is highest in the morning when we need to be awake and alert. Its levels drop as the day goes on and should be lowest in the evening, giving the body time to recover from its stimulating effect. Constantly high cortisol levels can cause more fat to be deposited in the abdominal area, which in turn increases the risk of getting heart disease and Type-2 diabetes.

The quality of your sleep is just as important as the quantity when it comes to waking up refreshed as well as maintaining your weight. You can get the correct number of hours of sleep but if you are awakened several times because of sleep apnea (difficulty in breathing during sleep) or the loud snores of your bed partner, you may not get enough of the deep sleep or REM sleep that you need. This, in turn, will affect your growth hormone and cortisol levels.

## Practical implications

After all this bad news, you might be thinking, "What's the use? The odds are stacked against me. I'll just be old and fat." Not true. By watching your diet and exercising regularly, you can keep the middle-age bulge down to a minimum. Just don't compare your body with that of a 20-year-old or you will get very frustrated.

This research shows how important it is to make sure you get enough sleep. It's bad enough that there are age-related changes in our sleep that are beyond our control. Let's not make matter worse by not getting enough of it.

Scientists like Van Cauter are also experimenting with medication to lengthen deep sleep and dream time to delay the effects of aging.

## No energy to exercise

Still another reason why lack of sleep can make you gain weight is you have no energy to exercise. This is a no-brainer. How can you feel like exercising when you can barely stay awake during the day because you aren't getting enough sleep at night?

How can you tell if you are getting enough sleep? Constantly sleeping one or two hours less a day leads to a condition that sleep researchers call "chronic sleep debt." Many people are so used to living this way that they think this is normal. They don't realize how much better they can feel and function if they sleep the required number of hours appropriate for them.

According to the US National Sleep Foundation, newborns need 16 hours, toddlers need 11 hours plus a two-hour nap during the day, preschoolers need 11 to 12 hours, school-age children need 10 hours, teens need about nine hours, and adults need an average of eight hours. Elderly people usually sleep six hours but it is not sure whether this is a normal sign of aging or something that can be prevented.

Some people need a little less than eight hours, while some need a little more. Some really unusual people are genetically predisposed to do very well on just four or five hours. How can you tell how much you need? Sleep experts say you are getting enough if you can wake up without an alarm clock, you aren't sleepy during the day, and you have no difficulty falling asleep at night.

## Epworth Sleepiness Scale

Another way to find out if you are getting enough sleep is the Epworth Sleepiness Scale. Based on the following situations and the way you have been feeling in recent times, how likely are you to doze off or fall asleep? If you have not encountered some of the situations recently, imagine how you would react if you did.

Use the following scale to choose the most appropriate number for each situation: 0=would never doze, 1=slight chance of dozing, 2=moderate chance of dozing, 3=high chance of dozing.

"Chance of dozing" situations: Sitting and reading, watching TV, sitting inactive in a public place (example, a theater or a meeting), as a passenger in a car for an hour without a break, lying down to rest in the afternoon, sitting and talking to someone, sitting quietly after lunch without alcohol, in a car while stopped for a few minutes in traffic.

Interpret your score: 1 to 6=you are getting enough sleep; 7 to 8=your score is average; 9+=you are abnormally sleepy.

*Next week: How to get a good night's sleep.*

*Watch "In Fitness and In Health" on Mondays to Fridays on Studio 23 from 6 to 6:30 a.m. and Net25 from 6 to 6:30 p.m.*

*For past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com*

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# Summer survival kit

THE SUN can be harsh on your skin, hair, body and feet. That's why Lush has come up with the definitive guide to surviving summer and emerging more beautiful than ever.

Marilyn (P425), with the aid of lemon juice, revitalizes, brightens and helps to enhance the hair's natural (or un-natural) highlights. It also contains chamomile, saffron and olive oil to condition and strengthen hair, leaving it silky and manageable.

Pied De Pepper (P395) foot cream is ideal for use after a long day on the beach. The sand acts as an excellent exfoliator for your heels and toes during the day, then after showering smother them in Pied De Pepper to moisturize and soften any hard skin to leave them looking fab. Containing ginger, dove bud, cinnamon leaf and cocoa butter, your feet will be soothed and deodorized ready for the evening ahead.

Freeze (P150) is a cocktail of sea water, soothing aloe vera and peppermint, which has the canny knack of cooling you down when you feel hot. Made in a handy travel size, this is ideal for keeping you cool during those balmy evenings.

King of Skin (P275) vitamin-rich body treatment will leave skin feeling soft and smooth after a hard day sunning yourself. It even helps to maintain your tan. There are moisturizers like cocoa butter and fresh, organic bananas and avocados that act as emollient to keep in much needed moisture to help prevent peeling.

Ultimate Shine (P245) shampoo contains spicy elemi, softening violet leaf oil and calming ylang ylang, it will transform sun-damaged, salty, tangled locks into silky, shiny hair with manageability and bounce.

Skin Drink (P495) is a rich, thick moisturizer that is a perfect after sun. Contains soothing aloe vera, calming rose oil, moisturizing sesame, almond and evening primrose oils, emollient and fresh avocado, this cream is pure heaven for sunburnt skin. The best thing is it won't disappear as soon as you put it on; it will stay there and soothe, leaving you ready to face another day's sunbathing.

Cosmetic Lad (495) cream can be used as an after sun, hair cream and shaving balm. Contains lavender water, chamomile, cocoa butter, sandalwood and tangerine oil, it's great for your skin and works to prevent the really annoying peeling on the nose.

Lush is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. Lush boutiques are located at Glorietta 4 Makati, Power Plant Mall in Rockwell, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, and Greenbelt 3 Makati.

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